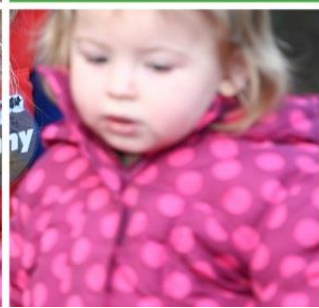
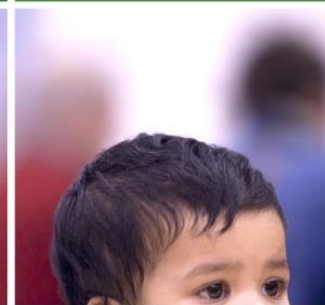
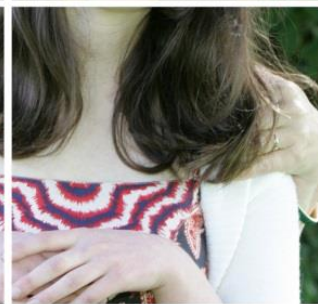


Making it Work: Learning and Evaluation Contract

Year Two Programme Report

July 2015



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Sarah Pearson, Elaine Batty, Chris Dayson, Will Eadson, Elizabeth Sanderson

***Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR)
Sheffield Hallam University***

Colin Lindsay, Anne Marie Cullen

Scottish Centre for Employment Research (SCER) University of Strathclyde

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Summary

This report is the year two programme evaluation of Making it Work (MIW). It accompanies individual reports which have been produced for each of the five Making it Work partnerships. Subsequent annual reports will be produced in 2016 and 2017, along with a final programme evaluation report in 2017.

Making it Work

MIW is a Big Lottery Fund (BIG) in Scotland programme designed to support lone parents living in complex circumstances. It is being delivered from 2013 to 2017 in five local authority areas where there are high concentrations of lone parent families: Edinburgh, Fife, Glasgow, North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire.

MIW is based on a model of support which includes signposting and accessing existing service provision, key worker support, and linking between employability and support services including childcare.

Learning and Evaluation

There are three overall objectives for the learning and evaluation contract:

- to track the success of the programme, and projects and interventions within it
- to identify what works well, for whom and in what circumstances
- to share learning and improve practice (including amongst grant holders).

Activities and Outputs

In two years of delivery 2,051 lone parents have received support from MIW partnerships. In 2014/15 1,810 lone parents received support.

In 2014/15 1,180 lone parents completed action plans, 425 lone parents obtained accredited training outcomes, 283 achieved non-accredited training outcomes and 708 lone parents received basic skills support. Across the year 1,305 lone parents received personal development support, 836 received support to address practical issues such as debt or housing, 1,004 received support to address personal issues associated with problems such as health or substance abuse.

Relatively few lone parents undertook work experience or volunteering through the MIW programme in 2014/15: 54 lone parents undertook work experience and 38 engaged in volunteering. A considerable number of lone parents (298) supported through the MIW programme gained paid work, and the majority of paid work was full-time (267). In addition, 282 lone parents have received in-work support.

In 2014/15, 656 lone parents accessed MIW funded childcare provision for 921 children.

The MIW model

Year two evaluation explored the implementation and impact of three aspects of the MIW model: key worker and group support; working with other agencies; engaging employers and in-work support. MIW partnerships have successfully supported lone parents to make progress toward sustainable employment and the combination of one to one and group work approaches has delivered positive outcomes for lone parents and their families. There is evidence that the provision of integrated support, which takes a demand-led approach to addressing a wide range of lone parents' needs, is facilitating engagement with services, although there are challenges in particular arising from the impacts of welfare reform, which sometimes conflict with the aims of MIW. Partnerships have engaged widely with employers, and this is delivering benefits for both lone parents and employers, although there is recognition that there is scope for additional engagement which emphasises the benefits to employers of taking on lone parents as employees. The approach that MIW partnerships have taken to job placement and to supporting lone parents who are in work focuses on empowering lone parents to obtain appropriate work in which there are opportunities for progression and which promotes sustainable employment.

MIW clients: distance travelled

Data from baseline and follow-up client surveys is used to assess the characteristics and progress of lone parents who have been supported by the MIW partnerships. At the baseline stage the majority of lone parents had not worked for 12 months or more. Forty five per cent of lone parents for whom follow-up surveys were received were no longer supported by the partnership. Around 20 per cent of lone parents who were not in contact with the partnerships at the six month follow-up period had moved into work or employment.

The data suggest that lone parents who continue to be supported by the MIW partnerships at the six month follow-up survey are more likely to be older, and to report problems with depression and stress. There have been improvements across almost all indicators of progression, and the areas where lone parents report the largest improvements are in relation to employment related skills, interview skills and CV preparation; and in relation to their confidence and self-esteem.

Costs and benefits

The overall aims and objectives of the programme are to support lone parents with complex needs who are facing considerable challenges in engaging with support agencies and the labour market. The programme is performing in line with the expectations of the funder, and client survey data and qualitative evidence present a very strong picture in terms of the benefits of the intensive support delivered to lone parents through the MIW partnerships. Analysis of current data on the costs and benefits of the MIW programme suggests that the economic value of skills and job outcomes is modest at this stage. A next phase of the economic analysis is to work with the MIW partnerships to gain a fuller understanding of the value of wider benefits associated with the MIW model.

Conclusions and learning

MIW partnerships have continued to provide intensive, genuinely personalised support for lone parents who are facing significant challenges in returning to work and whose needs are not met by mainstream provision. The personalised and choice-based approach of MIW is valued by lone parents, and the support model, which complements existing employability provision by targeting the early stages of the employability pipeline, has enabled lone parents to make significant progress towards sustainable employment and is delivering positive outcomes for lone parents and their families. The emphasis within the programme on targeting fair and productive work opportunities is a distinctive feature of the programme and differentiates it from the 'work first' approach of mainstream provision.

There are ongoing challenges for the MIW programme including the need for closer integration with mainstream employability provision and further engagement with employers. Moving forward, MIW partnerships will need to give attention to locating their offer within the patchwork of local partnerships in order to make, and maintain, a strong case for ongoing funding.

Learning points in relation to what has 'worked well' in supporting lone parents include

- bringing together complementary expertise into broad-based partnerships which provide support across a range of issues including client engagement and personalised support, employability advice, money advice and financial management, and other services of value to lone parents
- building multiple alliances which enable partnerships to provide genuinely flexible and demand-led approach to support and the provision of 'wraparound' support that opens doors and removes non-employment specific barriers to entering work
- a distinctive and complementary content which fills a gap in provision and has a clear focus on supporting disadvantaged lone parents and those further from the labour market
- high quality development worker/ key worker support which builds confidence and addresses practical issues, and is aligned to focused employability support, can deliver rapid progression
- group-based and vocational activity as a route to integration and employability. During 2014-15, MIW has developed group-based activities which have the potential to build social capital, address isolation and provide access to peer support for lone parents.
- a clear ethos of empowerment and coproduction, which is valued by MIW clients and which differentiates MIW from mainstream provision is contributing to sustainable outcomes.

Introduction

The report presents data from the second year of the Making it Work (MIW) learning and evaluation contract. It accompanies individual reports which have been produced for each of the five Making it Work partnerships.

1.1. Making it Work

The Big Lottery Fund (BIG) in Scotland is investing £7 million in MIW, an innovative programme designed to support lone parents living in complex circumstances. It is being delivered by partnerships involving public, private and voluntary and community sector providers in five local authority areas where there are high concentrations of lone parent families: Edinburgh, Fife, Glasgow, North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire. MIW is providing lone parents with intensive support in their journeys toward sustainable employment, and runs from 2013 to 2017.

The Making it Work programme is based on a model of support which includes signposting and accessing existing service provision, key worker support, and linking between employability and support services including childcare. It includes the following elements:

- early engagement: reaching and engaging lone parents
- pre-engagement: personal development, planning for work and childcare, improved and accelerated access to provision for lone parents
- engagement: access to mainstream provision, supporting lone parents to engage with mainstream providers and ensuring effective access and support
- post-employment: support for job retention and progression, and working with employers to encourage family friendly practice.

1.2. Learning and Evaluation

The learning and evaluation contract is being delivered by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR) at Sheffield Hallam University, and the Scottish Centre for Employment Research (SCER) at the University of Strathclyde. There are three overall objectives for the learning and evaluation contract:

- to track the success of the programme, and projects and interventions within it
- to identify what works well, for whom and in what circumstances
- to share learning and improve practice (including amongst grant holders).

These objectives are being met through three work streams:

Work stream 1: bespoke partnership-level evaluations which capture the achievements of the MIW partnerships in each year of activity and over the lifetime of the programme.

Work stream 2: programme-level evaluation which builds on the partnership-level evaluations to assess the impact of the programme, and identifies best practice with a view to informing future delivery.

Work stream 3: learning activities which provide learning to partners and other stakeholders to maximise the impact of the programme and support on-going activity.

This report is a key output from the second of these work streams: programme level evaluation. It is the second of a series of annual programme evaluations. Subsequent annual reports will be produced in 2016 and 2017, along with a final programme evaluation report in 2017.

The report draws on a number of data sources:

- semi-structured interviews (conducted face to face and over the telephone) with representatives of MIW partnerships. Interviews were carried out across the five MIW partnerships between January and March 2015
- interviews with MIW clients carried out between January and March 2015
- MIW client surveys: support workers have assisted MIW clients to complete an online survey within 4 weeks of joining the programme, and at follow-up intervals of six and 12 months. Workers have aimed to complete the survey for all clients joining the MIW programme, although resource constraints have meant that this has not always been possible.
- partnership data: MIW partnerships have completed a template which collects standardised monitoring data across the five partnerships

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 provides information on the activities and outputs of the five MIW partnerships over the 12 months April 2014 to March 2015

Chapter 2 reviews key aspects of the MIW delivery model: supporting lone parents; working with other providers; in-work support.

Chapter 3 utilises data from client surveys to explore the distance travelled by lone parents and outcomes for MIW clients

Chapter 4 looks at the costs and benefits of the MIW programme

Chapter 5 contains conclusions and key learning points.

Activities and Outputs

This section provides details on the activities and outputs of the MIW partnerships during 2014/15. Each partnership submitted output data in April/May 2015 that summarised their achievements during the previous 12 months. It is important to note the process for collecting output data has changed significantly, in response to feedback from the 5 MIW partnerships since 2013/14, when partnerships submitted summaries on a monthly basis¹ and as a result, comparability between the first two years of data is limited. Tables 1.1 to 1.3 provide an aggregated summary of this self-reported data for all five partnerships.

2.1. Headline outputs

Table 1.1 provides an overview of the headline outputs reported by MIW partnerships since it started. It shows that across the partnerships, 2,051 lone parents have received support 2,319 have been referred to the programme for support.

Table 1.1: Headline partnership level outputs since the start of the MIW programme

	Programme Totals (2013/14-2014/15)					
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Edinburgh</i>	<i>Fife</i>	<i>Glasgow</i>	<i>S Lanarks</i>	<i>N Lanarks</i>
Number of lone parents supported	2,051	286	313	958	304	190
Number of referrals-in to the programme	2,319	563	500	958	628	298

Table 1.2 provides a more detailed overview of MIW beneficiaries and referrals for the most recent financial year (2014/15). It shows that overall 1,810 lone parents received support during this year. Of these 1,145 were new starters (i.e. they joined the programme in 2014/15) and at the end of the period 1,338 of these clients remained on partnership's caseloads. These new starters were drawn from 2,156

¹ The Year 1 report noted a number of teething problems with this data collection. Notably:

- At the time of reporting Fife had not submitted data for March 2014
- Edinburgh did not submit any data until March 2014, and did so on an aggregate basis for the whole November 13-March 14 period..

In response, the Evaluation Team worked with the partnerships during 2014-14 to revise the data collection process, with a view to simplifying the process for partnerships and improving comparability of data for the remainder of the evaluation

referrals to the partnerships. A total of 613 lone parents were referred on to external agencies such as Jobcentre Plus.

Table 1.2: Headline partnership level outputs for 2014/25

	2014/15					
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Edinburgh</i>	<i>Fife</i>	<i>Glasgow</i>	<i>S Lanarks</i>	<i>N Lanarks</i>
Beneficiaries:						
Number of lone parents supported	1,810	286	262	778	304	180
Number of lone parents supported who were new starters	1,145	234	112	401	281	117
Number of lone parents on the caseload at the end of the year	1,338	286	188	520	197	147
Referrals:						
Number of referrals-in to the programme	2,156	440	200	826	524	166
Number of lone parents referred-out to external agencies	613	257	139	-	163	57

2.2. Types of support provided

Table 1.3 provides a more detailed picture of each area support provided by MIW partnerships in 2014/15 across the areas of employment support, training and skills support, personal support, work experience and volunteering, paid work and childcare. Each of these is discussed in turn, below.

Table 1.3: Overview of support outputs for 2014/15

	2014/15					
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Edinburgh</i>	<i>Fife</i>	<i>Glasgow</i>	<i>S Lanarks</i>	<i>N Lanarks</i>
Employment support:						
Number of lone parents completing action plans	1,180	286	112	390	212	180
Number of lone parents undertaking job search activities	727	71	240	242	131	43
Training and skills support:						
Number of lone parents obtaining non-accredited training outcomes	283	18	49	93	123	-
Number of lone parents obtaining accredited training outcomes	425	59	30	179	119	38
Number of lone parents receiving basic skills support	708	286	123	282	17	-
Personal support:						
Number of lone parents receiving personal development support	1,305	286	262	378	304	75
Number of lone parents receiving support to address personal issues (health, substance use etc.)	836	109	245	298	148	36
Number of lone parents receiving support to address practical issues (debt, transport, housing)	1,004	175	75	532	165	57
Work experience and volunteering:						
Number of lone parents engaged in work experience	54	4	35	7	8	-
Number of lone parents engaged in volunteering	38	14	-	11	6	7
Paid work:						
Number of lone parents gaining part-time employment	31	6	6	2	16	1
Number of lone parents gaining full-time employment	267	29	46	131	29	32
Number of lone parents receiving in-work support	282	25	52	127	45	3
Childcare:						
Number of lone parents accessing MIW funded childcare	656	36	12	520	88	-
Number of children of lone parents accessing MIW funded childcare	921	51	24	747	99	-

Employment support

The most prevalent type of employment support provided through the MIW programme was action plans with 1,180 completed in 2014/15. Job searches were also a common type of support with 727 undertaken across the year.

Training and skills support

Formal training was less common than basic skills support but where training was undertaken it tended to lead to accredited outcomes. In 2014/15 425 lone parents obtained accredited training outcomes and 283 achieved non-accredited training outcomes. By comparison 708 lone parents received basic skills across the year.

Personal support

Personal support was a key feature of MIW partnerships' activities. Across the year 1,305 received personal development support, 836 received support to address practical issues such as debt or housing, 1,004 received support to address personal issues associated with problems such as health or substance abuse.

Work experience and volunteering

Relatively few lone parents undertook work experience or volunteering through the MIW programme in 2014/15: 54 lone parents undertook work experience 38 engaged in volunteering.

Paid work

During the year a considerable number of lone parents (298) supported through the MIW programme gained paid work, and the majority of paid work was full-time (267). However, at this stage of the evaluation the extent to which these job outcomes can be attributed to the support provided by MIW partnerships is unclear. MIW partnerships are also providing lone parents with in-work support: across 2014/16 282 lone parents have received in-work support.

Childcare

Childcare for lone parents is a key feature of most MIW partnerships. In 2014/15 656 lone parents accessed MIW funded childcare provision for 921 children.

This chapter has utilised data provided by the MIW partnerships to provide a summary of the activities and outputs of the programme over the 12 months April 2014 to March 2015. The next chapter looks in more detail at key aspects of MIW activity: supporting lone parents, working with agencies, and provision of in-work support.

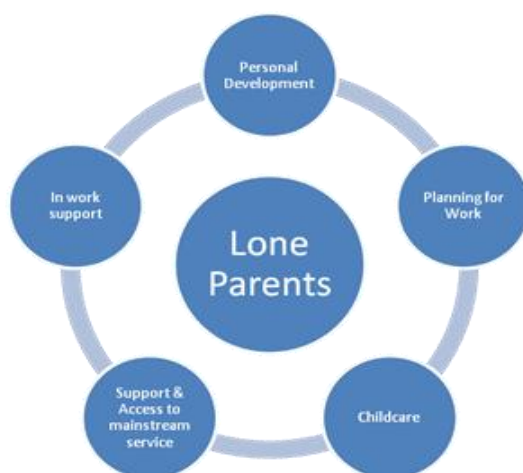
The MIW model

This chapter explores three key aspects of the MIW delivery model: supporting lone parents; working with other agencies; and the provision of in-work support. It draws on data gathered through interviews with MIW stakeholders and clients.

3.1. Supporting lone parents

A key aspect of the MIW model is the provision of integrated, bespoke support to lone parents to enable them to balance work, childcare and family life, and to facilitate access to high quality services to meet their needs. Figure 2.1 provides an illustration of the MIW support model.

Figure 2.1 MIW support model



Source: Big Lottery Fund Scotland

There are distinctive features to the delivery mechanisms between the five MIW partnerships, reflecting local need and circumstances:

- in Edinburgh, the support is led by Capital City Partnership development workers, and embedded in four community locations, working closely with trusted community organisations. There has been a focus in Year 2 of the programme on developing vocational group work in order to build peer support networks for MIW clients
- the Fife MIW partnership is led by Gingerbread, with support workers linking local employability services and money advice, alongside ASPIRE and other

- group work. A work placement team provides intensive support for clients moving into work
- Jobs and Business Glasgow lead the MIW partnership in Glasgow with strong bespoke training programme content from start; key worker support delivered in local 'hubs' and a multi-expertise partnership providing a range of services (Wise Group; Rosemount Lifelong Learning)
- in North Lanarkshire, the Routes To Work-led MIW partnership, operating under the name of Action: Lone Parents adopts an intensive focus on an area for a six months period, including a high profile marketing campaign and community presence to encourage lone parents to engage with provision. The partnership delivers combined one-to-one support and group work
- in South Lanarkshire, the support is led by Routes To Work key workers embedded in four community locations. In Year 2 of the programme there has been a focus on delivering a structured programme of group work.

The partnerships deliver support across the Scottish Government employability pathway but there is a strong focus on delivering support at stages one and two, and engaging those who are facing significant challenges in moving towards sustainable employment. The Action: Lone Parents partnership in North Lanarkshire offers an exemplar. The project offers five stages of support, each linked to a keyworker, which can be summarised as

- Family support worker – for those with lifestyle/family problems, who are furthest from the labour market
- Lone parent support worker – for those with serious barriers, but not 'chaotic lives'
- Key worker – when ready to look at employment
- Transition worker – in-work or in-training support
- Financial inclusion officer – seen at various points throughout the whole cycle.

The emphasis on intensive, personalised support is common to all five partnerships and is an integral feature of the MIW model which complements, and supports, mainstream employability services. In interviews, both partnership workers and clients expressed strong views that one to one working is a crucial element of support, without which client outcomes would either not be achieved, or would take much longer to deliver. The establishment of positive relationships in which trust and rapport is built between lone parents and project workers and is seen critical, and establishing these relationships in the early stages of client engagement is a precursor to clients engaging with group work, other training activities and ultimately sustainable employment. One project worker in North Lanarkshire commented

“It allows people to have an identity and it can give a client the encouragement they need to take a step forward. Because particularly with the early stages, it's somebody caring about them, and if they are caring about them, they're more likely to take advice and guidance from them, it makes a big difference. We've had one client who's been through various services in the area over the last 10 years. They've been with ALP around 8 months and have started employment and is now sustaining in the job. For them it was about having someone they could believe in and trust. There's often paranoia about 'what's in it for them, why do they want to help me?'” (project worker)

In Edinburgh, as in other MIW partnerships, clients commented on the wide range of benefits associated with development worker support. These included accessing

local authority welfare funds, dealing with debt issues, and developing an action plan to progress their employability. At the most basic level, clients interviewed for the research valued the commitment, support and care offered by development workers.

“I wasn’t forced into anything and I don’t think she would force anybody into anything at all... if I needed something extra I feel I could say that to her. She could help me out and put something in place and change something.” (lone parent)

“She [MIW development worker] made me feel really valued. I never, ever felt uneasy with her. Some people have that effect... she was willing to help. From the beginning she was basically about, ‘What do you want to do?’... she didn’t say, ‘I think you should do this’. It was me saying, ‘I want to do this’, and she was like, ‘Right, let’s get started’” (lone parent)

This emphasis on empowerment, and on a flexible approach which supports lone parents to engage with services on their own terms, and at their own pace, differentiates MIW from mainstream employability provision. Project workers acknowledged that this approach can be time and resource intensive: it was reported by stakeholders that it can take up to six months to stabilise a client's circumstances, and that often underlying barriers are not revealed until after several months of engagement. This can place considerable demands on support workers, and for partnerships, the commitment to deliver intensive support, particularly in the early stages of lone parent engagement with MIW, has sometimes necessitated drawing on additional resources, through for example other staff (not funded through MIW), or other agencies. However, this is balanced against moving clients from the earliest stages of support to being 'ready for work'.

In all partnerships there has been a move in Year 2 towards complementing intensive one to one support with group work activity. In part, this has been a response to the unanticipated levels of demand for the MIW programme. But it has also been a strategy to address the risk of creating dependency on support workers and to facilitate peer support networks and groups. In Glasgow, project workers and lone parents commented on the benefits of sharing experiences, challenges and issues with peers through the 'Hubs' which provide opportunities for social interaction and structured group work for MIW clients. Here, as in other MIW partnerships, this has built lone parents' confidence, and supported lone parents to develop skills to engage with new groups of people.

In Edinburgh, a MIW development worker saw additional benefits in the peer support offered by group work:

“There’s a real mixture of people who have got. I think there are four of them who are out working already, there are a few of them who are applying for college, and there are some who are really far removed... I brought them all together because I think the best learning you can do is from your peers.” (project worker)

Lone parents interviewed for this research also saw the value of peer support through group work.

“It’s definitely positive, it has helped me and I do believe from meeting other mums and stuff, they’re all at different levels and all in different situations but they seem to be happy working with Making it Work and it is helping them. There’s no pressure as well, which is a great thing, they won’t judge you, they are more friendly towards you as well which makes you comfortable to go, ‘I am

stuck with this thing, it's a bit personal'. You know they won't repeat it or anything like that, which is good." (lone parent)

"It's nice. Like you get to know people and it's just being on the same wavelength... people being in the same situation when they're single parents and looking to get back into work or study. It's good to know it's not just you in that situation." (lone parent)

"we were a good group...it gives you a perspective to see that you're not the only one going through it, there's actually other people going through the same stuff and you're not alone. The groups were more of a confidence building thing (lone parent).

In terms of the impact of the support model, there is extensive evidence of progression and positive outcomes for clients, demonstrated by the client survey data contained at Chapter Three. In addition, lone parents interviewed spoke extensively about the benefits of having access to these forms of support, both for themselves and their families.

Claire's Journey

Claire is 30 years old and has two children aged 8 and 6. Claire became involved with the Making It Work programme in November 2013. Having been referred to the programme by the Job Centre, Claire didn't know what to expect and was a little nervous about the expectations that might be placed on her. However, her fears were soon allayed and she settled into the programme straight away. She explained to the evaluators that she found the atmosphere of MIW relaxed and supportive. She undertook a number of courses and activities including customer care, first aid, business relationships, confidence building, and attended the job club, all of which have helped her to build a personal portfolio.

Claire particularly appreciated the relationship she had built with her advisor and welcomed the personalised approach she received helping her to reach her goals.

" you get to build a relationship with that one person instead of it being with all different people going through your paperwork.... it definitely helped having just one person...you build a friendship with them and obviously the more and more you go and see them the more and more you'll tell them things, so having the same one really does benefit you"

Claire was frightened about entering employment as she had been away for the job market for some time looking after her family but with the help of the advisor and the relaxed attitude to finding work, Claire felt able to take her time and choose a way forward that suited her.

Putting her newly acquired skills to the test, Claire managed to secure a college course studying painting and decorating, beating over 100 individuals. She attributed this mainly to the support she had received from her advisor and the additional help with interview skills and other confidence building activities undertaken while engaging with the Making it Work Programme. She is hoping to enrol on a further 6 months course to enhance her skills and then to explore the possibility of starting her own decorating business.

Speaking about her experiences, Claire was keen to emphasise the importance of the advisor and in particular the trusting relationship they had built during the course of the programme

"If it wasn't for [the worker] I wouldn't be where I am today, and I'm actually getting somewhere and when you have children you feel as if that's all you are is a mummy but because I've had help and everything she's done for me I've actually got something I can do for my own it makes me feel like a person again not just labelled as you're a mummy".

Putting into practice some of the skills and knowledge she has learnt on the course, Claire explained how she has applied those to her family life.

"I have been doing the same with my children...trying to pass it on to them so they have got the head start for when they are older. It's made me look at them a different way as well. I am trying to pass on all the stuff and kind of drum it into them as well"

The evidence from the Year 2 evaluation is that the combination of intensive one to one support and group work is effective in supporting lone parents to engage with provision and move towards employment. The success of this model in meeting the

needs of those furthest from the labour market presents a range of social and economic benefits, which include individuals moving into paid work, but also improved social skills and family relationships.

3.2. Working with other agencies

The development of strong and effective partnerships has been a key feature of the MIW programme. All five MIW partnerships have established partnerships which bring together resources and expertise across a range of domains: core project partners include organisations delivering employability support, alongside agencies delivering specialist support to lone parents, training, childcare and financial advice. The Year 1 programme evaluation report highlighted the importance of these partnerships in providing holistic support to lone parents and meeting local needs.

Evaluation work in Year 2 focused on the relationships that MIW partnerships have forged with agencies outside of the core project partners. There have been two key drivers for these alliances:

- accessing additional resources to support lone parent engagement and participation - this has been particularly the case in relation to community based organisations
- referral of MIW clients to other agencies for sources of support - for instance agencies delivering training and education, and those providing health and social care.

Partnerships have utilised local networks to forge a wide range of alliances, which are seen to be vital to delivering an integrated, demand-led service. An important aspect of MIW is facilitating lone parents' access to other provision, and partnerships are often engaged in negotiating access on behalf of their clients. A project worker commented

“what I can do is pick up the phone and make one phone call to access a service, rather than having to go through the whole referral process, and we wouldn't be able to do that without these alliances.” (project worker)

Specific support needs have emerged as the MIW programme has developed. For instance, in North Lanarkshire, relationships with mental health service providers have been established as a result of the needs of a number of clients. This was also an issue highlighted in Fife, where in terms of future partnership development, some support workers spoke of the need to strengthen relationships with local NHS stakeholders to address health and wellbeing issues.

“I think from the health point of view, again, a lot of people that we are working with, they quite openly say they're depressed or there's a lot of anxiety. I think if the NHS were working with us a bit more closely, we might be able to find other ways of helping them, as well as them helping us, in terms of knowing where people can go with certain things.”

And in Glasgow, new alliances have helped to address financial issues for MIW clients. These include 'Dress for Success', which has been incorporated into the programme in order to address difficulties that lone parents were having in affording suitable clothing for interviews and work, and access to food banks to address food poverty issues.

Relationships with Jobcentre plus continue to be an important aspect of provision. Jobcentre plus are a source of referrals for MIW partnerships, and close

collaboration between Jobcentre plus and MIW workers (including in some instances co-location) has helped to provide integrated support. However, an emerging issue from the 2014-15 research has related to the impact of the UK Government's welfare reform agenda, and the demands made upon some clients by Work Programme or Jobcentre Plus colleagues. In Fife, for instance, a support worker expressed a sense of detachment from the mandatory activities required by mainstream employment services.

"They [clients] will come back to me and say, 'The Work Programme's making me do this', and, 'The Work Programme's making me do that.' I'm like, 'There's absolutely nothing I can do with that one.'" (project worker)

Another worker, while acknowledging the demands placed upon Work Programme providers expressed concerns regarding the tension between MIW's holistic model of working and the 'work-first' approach of the Work Programme.

"They're trying to push this person, who's very well qualified and has great potential, would like to have a degree or finish her HND in construction management. They're saying, 'Well, you have to apply for a job as a cleaner on minimum wage..'" (project worker)

3.3. Engaging employers and in-work support

Employer engagement has been an important element of the programme activity in Year 2. All MIW partnerships have utilised a range of strategies to engage employers, including direct engagement, drive by both the needs and ambitions of clients, and by the requirements of employers. In Glasgow, the offer to employers includes recruitment and interviews, as well as ongoing training to develop employee skills. And in South Lanarkshire, a project worker described a number of specific cases of MIW staff directly engaging with employers to help to facilitate returns to work for lone parents.

"We've supported a few employers who've come to us with specific needs of what they were looking for, and we've spoken to them about specific needs of the lone parents that we've got. We've gone out because the lone parents are keen... and we've spoken to some employers to try and get some fixed hours in place, or some flexibility and we've really supported the employers through that..." (project worker)

In South and North Lanarkshire, the resources and reputation associated with Routes to Work provide a well-established model for connecting employers and clients. South Lanarkshire Council's 'Connect 2' offer and a range of 'academies' vocational provision provide sector-specific training, offering another important signposting route for MIW clients.

The demand-led nature of provision means that MIW partnerships have not directed clients towards specific employment sectors. However, support has perhaps inevitably been primarily aimed at industries that provide greater opportunities for part-time, flexible employment that many lone parents are seeking. Thus, MIW partnerships have engaged with employers in the health and social care, education, administrative, retail and call-centre sectors. Innovative strategies have been employed to provide work opportunities in these sectors including, in Glasgow, an Intermediate Labour Market project to enable clients to gain experience in administration and finance.

A positive outcome of employer engagement highlighted by interviewees was that dispelling of employer misconceptions in relation to lone parents' attitudes to work.

However, partnerships have experienced ongoing challenges in gaining access to employers and some stakeholders emphasised the need to further develop a specific employer engagement offer within MIW, with a view to raising awareness among employers as to the business case for hiring lone parents. One project worker commented

“I think lone parents have got a huge amount to contribute. I just feel that there needs to be, if you like, an awareness campaign or a championing of women returners, parent returners... I think that needs to be a far larger element, going forward.” (project worker)

The importance, and impact, of in-work support has emerged strongly as a key theme from the Year 2 evaluation. Common challenges for labour market returners include shift changes that disturb childcare arrangements, financial challenges, managing changes to benefits eligibility, and barriers in accessing training and progression. Support from MIW project workers has proved important in helping lone parents make transitions into employment and MIW's flexible funding also allows for development workers to support labour market returners with transitional expenses such as work clothing and transport. The presence of support workers as a 'safety net' and 'someone to turn to if things go wrong' was highlighted by lone parents as invaluable, particularly as often financial and childcare issues did not surface until a few weeks into employment.

In Edinburgh, one lone parent who had made the transition to working part-time (20 hours per week) in retail spoke of the challenges of returning to work and the support offered by development workers.

“I went through a little phase where I hated it. I'm not going to lie it's been tough sometimes... it's like it is hard. Really hard but I love the job. I can see myself moving up the ladder in there. And Kate [MIW development worker] was going to help me go for more jobs but I said to her, 'I'm quite happy where I am right now. I want to stick at this just to see how far I can go with it'.” (lone parent)

A key feature of MIW has been the placement of lone parents in employment that meets lone parents' needs and aspirations, and an emphasis on achieving appropriate job matches that would leave parents better off, offer opportunities for development and balance work and childcare responsibilities. In Fife, MIW advisers noted that a key priority was to achieve an appropriate job outcome for clients, in contrast to the more work-first-oriented approach of UK Government-funded employability programmes.

“We're not the Jobcentre but we totally understand that they've got their Jobseekers' Agreement. So we'll do everything we can to help them meet that, but our goal is to help them find the work that they want and that would fit in with their family, and their goals and aims.” (project worker)

Lone parents interviewed for our research valued the clear commitment among to MIW advisers to finding an appropriate and sustainable job match:

“She [MIW development worker] always says, 'Look for a job that best suits you. Don't do it for anybody else. Do it for yourself.'” (lone parent)

“Making it Work, they're dedicated to finding you something that's suitable for you. So it's the longevity in the job... If you're happy in a job and you enjoy your job, and you're making decent money you're not going to go anywhere....” (lone parent)

MIW partnerships have also encouraged and supported lone parents to progress in work settings. Another lone parent, who had progressed into work in retail spoke of the continuing support offered by her development worker in seeking progression in the workplace.

“At first when I got the job they weren’t really training me and my development worker said to me, ‘You need to say to them. You need to train me’. And after the conversation with her I went in and I was like, ‘Listen, I’m not getting trained and I’m unhappy about this. I’m going to go to the line manager about this because I’m not happy’. After that, they trained me on everything... so I’m trying to get, right now, as much training as possible so I know the job like the back of my hand because it’s hard. Like, I’ve seen what the supervisors have to do and their job is really, really, really hard.” (lone parent)

It is likely that the MIW partnerships' focus on appropriate job placements, combined with in-work support, will enhance the sustainability of employment placements for lone parents benefitting from the programme. At this stage of the programme the numbers of lone parents moving into work are not large enough to report with confidence on the impact of the approach in this area and this will be a focus of future research activity. However, one interviewee in North Lanarkshire pointed to the sustainability rate of lone parents supported by MIW into work in that area, over 80 per cent at six months, as being influenced by the confidence and self-efficacy clients have built up over the programme and importantly by the quality job outcomes achieved.

Joanne's Journey

Joanne has been supported by the MIW programme in Glasgow for two years. In August 2014 Joanne secured employment at Grand Central Savings working part time 25 hours per week. Joanne was pleased as this was her first interview. She was daunted by the prospect of change and explained that the aftercare worker provided much needed support and assurance. Joanne described the worker as “a safety net” just in case she needed help, but feeling more confident Joanne explained she was able to explore opportunities independently. However, she did continue to access advice from the worker, checking information and future options. Joanne really valued the continued training opportunities provided and has undertaken SVQ training, a communication skills course and a child protection course, all of which she felt would further her employment.

Joanne was very motivated and determined to succeed and explained the best thing about her experience was *"achieving what I set out to achieve and getting there, and its only took me about two years"*. She had made considerable progress and explained that she had a *"roof over my head, financial stability, and can see light at the end of the tunnel"*. Joanne also explained that she had changed her attitude and now thought she had a *"sense of responsibility and working for a living* and was able to pass these attitudes on to her children, particularly the *"value of earning"*.

Winning an Achievement Award for her endeavours made Joanne feel very proud. She acknowledged she had worked hard but also praised the programme for their help. *"we done it but we done it with help"*.

This chapter has looked at qualitative evidence to explore the implementation and impact of three aspects of the MIW model: key worker and group support; working with other agencies; engaging employers and in-work support. It has argued that MIW partnerships have successfully supported lone parents to make progress toward sustainable employment and that the combination of one to one and group work approaches to support has delivered positive outcomes for lone parents and their families. There is evidence that the provision of integrated support, which takes a demand-led approach to addressing a wide range of lone parents' needs is facilitating engagement with services, although there are challenges in particular arising from the impacts of welfare reform, which sometimes conflict with the aims of MIW. Partnerships have engaged widely with employers, and this is delivering benefits for both lone parents and employers although there is recognition that there is scope for additional engagement which emphasises the benefits to employers of taking on lone parents as employees. The approach that MIW partnerships have taken to job placement and to supporting lone parents who are in work focuses on empowering lone parents to obtain appropriate work in which there are opportunities for progression and promotes sustainable employment.

The next chapter looks at progression and outcomes for MIW clients

MIW clients: Distance travelled

This chapter utilises data from the client surveys to assess the characteristics of MIW clients, the barriers they face, and the distance travelled in overcoming these barriers and moving towards sustainable employment. Data is drawn from baseline client surveys administered by project workers for clients joining the programme between 1 November 2013 and 28 February 2015 and 6 month follow-up surveys undertaken with these participants submitted on or before 28 February 2015. 838 responses to the baseline survey were submitted online for clients joining the Programme between November 2013 and February 2015 and 292 responses were submitted during this period to the follow-up survey, representing 35 per cent of the baseline. Of these 292 follow-ups, 160 clients were still receiving support from the MIW partnerships. Table 4.1 looks at the reasons why the remaining 132 clients were no longer receiving support from the MIW partnerships. It suggests that around 20 per cent of these had moved into work or training and no longer required support. The partnerships had lost contact with 44 per cent of these clients and it is not known what their current situation is

Table 4.1: Reason for no longer receiving support?

<i>Respondents to the follow-up survey no longer receiving support</i>		
	Count	Per cent
Contact has been lost with the client and it is not clear what their current situation is	58	44
They no longer require support (for reasons other than above)	20	15
They are in employment (including self-employment) and no longer require support	13	10
They are in full-time education and no longer require support	13	10
They are no longer seeking employment	4	3
Other reason	24	18
Total	132	100

The remainder of this section looks at data for the baseline and follow-up surveys for the 160 clients who were still receiving support from the MIW partnerships at the six month follow-up stage. These lone parents represent around 19 per cent of clients for whom baseline surveys were received and 12 per cent of the 1,338 lone parents who were being supported by MIW partnership at the end of March 2015.

4.1. Characteristics

Tables 4.2 to 4.14 look at the characteristics of lone parents engaged with MIW partnerships at the baseline and follow-up stages. They reveal that older lone parents, and those who report that they have depression or stress, make up a higher proportion of the sample at six months, when compared to the baseline. These conditions occur frequently amongst lone parents supported by MIW partnerships, with 64 per cent of follow-up respondents reporting that they have depression, and 58 per cent reporting that they have stress or anxiety. A higher proportion of lone parents in the follow-up sample than in the baseline sample report that their disability or illness limits their activities. There is a smaller proportion of lone parents in the six month follow up sample with three or more children (when compared to the baseline) and a slightly higher proportion with caring responsibilities. At both baseline and follow-up stages the majority of participants are female, are in receipt of benefits and living in rented accommodation, and have standard level qualifications.

Table 4.2: Gender

<i>All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support</i>				
	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Male	37	4	8	5
Female	801	96	152	95
Total	838	100	160	100

Table 4.3: Age

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
16-24	235	29	45	28
25-34	376	46	60	38
35-49	206	25	50	32
50+	7	1	3	2
Total	824	100	158	100

Table 4.4: Disability or illness?

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Yes	179	21	33	21
No	659	79	127	79
Total	838	100	160	100

Table 4.5: Disability or illness type

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support who have a disability or illness

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Depression	102	57	21	64
Stress or anxiety	90	50	19	58
Mental illness	45	25	3	9
Learning difficulties	20	11	2	6
Health problems due to drug use	6	3	1	3
Health problems due to alcohol use	2	1	0	0
Other disability or illness	46	26	13	39
Base	179		33	

Table 4.6: Disability or illness limits activities?

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support who have a disability or illness

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Yes	102	57	21	64
No	77	43	12	36
Total	179	100	33	100

Table 4.7: Number of children respondents have

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
1	418	50	88	55
2	244	29	47	29
3	116	14	18	11
4	37	4	4	3
5	13	2	3	2
6	6	1	0	0
7	4	0	0	0
Total	838	100	160	100

Table 4.8: Number of children respondents have living at home

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
0	4	0	2	1
1	443	53	92	58
2	236	28	46	29
3	102	12	16	10
4	30	4	3	2
5	8	1	1	1
6	5	1	0	0
7	2	0	0	0
Total	830	100	160	100

Table 4.9: Age of children living at home

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support with children living at home

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Under 2	162	11	19	8
2-5	665	47	128	52
6-16	541	38	93	38
Over 16	48	3	6	2
Total	1416	100	246	100

Table 4.10: Caring responsibilities?

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Yes	79	9	17	11
No	759	91	143	89
Total	838	100	160	100

Table 4.11: Receive benefits?

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Yes	835	100	158	99
No	3	0	2	1
Total	838	100	160	100

Table 4.12: Benefits received

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support who receive benefits

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Housing Benefit	660	79	129	82
Child Benefit	536	64	135	85
Child Tax Credit	506	61	129	82
Income Support for Lone Parents	407	49	67	42
Income Support	235	28	36	23
Job Seekers Allowance	159	19	32	20
Employment and Support Allowance	29	3	7	4
Carers Allowance	26	3	8	5
Disability Living Allowance (Child)	23	3	6	4
Personal Independence Payments/ Disability Living Allowance (Adult)	13	2	3	2
Other	48	6	22	14
<i>Base</i>	<i>835</i>		<i>158</i>	

Table 4.13: Do you own your own house or is it rented?

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Rented from a Housing Association	259	31	45	28
Rented from Local Authority	250	30	52	33
Rented from a private landlord	239	29	48	30
Live with parents	44	5	8	5
Owner occupier - with mortgage	17	2	4	3
Owner occupier - without mortgage/owned outright	1	0	0	0
Other	28	3	3	2
Total	838	100	160	100

Table 4.14: Qualifications

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Standard Grade	440	53	84	53
SVQ Level 2	74	9	14	9
Higher Grade	55	7	11	7
Intermediate 2	45	5	9	6
SVQ Level 1	44	5	5	3
HNC	38	5	6	4
NQ Access 3 Cluster/ Intermediate 1	35	4	5	3
SVQ Level 3	35	4	5	3
SCOTVEC/ National Certificate Module	33	4	9	6
GCSE	27	3	12	8
School leaving certificate/ NQ Unit	24	3	10	6
GCSE O Level	16	2	5	3
HND	15	2	4	3
First Degree	13	2	4	3
Higher Degree	12	1	2	1
A Level	5	1	2	1
ONC	4	0	2	1
SVQ Level 5 or equivalent	4	0	0	0
City and Guilds CRAFT	3	0	2	1
GNVQ/GSVQ Foundation or Intermediate	3	0	0	0
SCOTVEC National Diploma	3	0	0	0
Advanced Higher CSYS	2	0	1	1
AS Level	2	0	0	0
City and Guilds Advanced Craft	1	0	1	1
CSE	1	0	1	1
OND	1	0	0	0
SVQ Level 4	1	0	1	1
Advanced Senior Certificate or equivalent	0	0	0	0
GNVQ/GSVQ Advanced	0	0	0	0
Professional Qualifications (e.g. teaching, accountancy)	0	0	0	0
RSA Advanced Diploma or equivalent	0	0	0	0
RSA Diploma or equivalent	0	0	0	0
RSA Higher Diploma or equivalent	0	0	0	0
Senior certificate or equivalent	0	0	0	0

No qualifications	177	21	34	21
Don't know	23	3	3	2
Other qualifications not already mentioned	34	4	18	11
<i>Base</i>	838		160	

Tables 4.15 to 4.18 look at the employment status of lone parents immediately before their engagement with the MIW programme and their previous employment history. This data is a useful indication of the degree to which programme participants are engaged with labour market activity before joining the programme. The data suggest that 56 per cent of respondents were looking for work in the period immediately before joining the programme. However, evidence from MIW partnerships suggests that this figure is likely to be an over-estimate. Prior engagement with agencies, and expectations associated with benefits conditionality, may well lead participants to feel obliged to report that they are actively seeking work when in reality labour market engagement may be limited.

Seventy nine per cent of respondents had previously held a job, and 21 per cent had not. However, 86 per cent of respondents who had worked previously had not done so for 12 months or more, and 38 per cent had not worked for 5 years or longer.

4.2. Employment History - Baseline responses

Table 4.15: What were you doing in the four weeks before you started on the programme?

<i>All respondents to the baseline survey</i>		
	Count	Per cent
Not working and looking for work	471	56
Not working and not looking for work	293	35
Caring	92	11
Education/ Training	26	3
Volunteering	19	2
Unable to work	17	2
Working 16 hours or more	13	2
Working less than 16 hours	6	1
Maternity Leave	4	0
Work placement	2	0
Self-employed	0	0
Other	12	1
<i>Base</i>	838	

Table 4.16: Ever had a paid job?

<i>All respondents to the baseline survey</i>		
	Count	Per cent
Yes	658	79
No	180	21
Total	838	100

Table 4.17: Length of time since last paid job?

<i>All respondents to the baseline survey who have ever had a paid job</i>		
	Count	Per cent
Less than twelve weeks	31	5
More than twelve weeks but less than 1	67	10
More than 1 year but less than 5 years	313	48
5 years or longer	247	38
Total	658	100

Table 4.18: Experience of the labour market

<i>All respondents to the baseline survey</i>		
	Count	Per cent
Applied for jobs	667	80
Attended a job interview	590	70
Undertaken some form of work experience	453	54
Taken up training	386	46
Undertaken some form of volunteering	191	23
Set up your own business	30	4
None of the above	29	3
<i>Base</i>	838	

4.3. Employment status - Follow-up responses

Tables 4.19 to 4.21 look at the employment status of respondents at the follow-up stage, and for those respondents who are in work (and still supported by the MIW partnerships) the length of time working and satisfaction with their job. It should be noted however, that the numbers of respondents who are in-work at the follow-up stage is small.

Table 4.19 indicates that the proportion of respondents who are not working and not looking for work has increased to 48 per cent, compared to 35 per cent at the baseline stage (Table 4.15). This is not unexpected. Outlined above, the proportion of respondents reporting that they were actively seeking work at the baseline stage is likely to be affected by expectations in relation to benefits conditionality. In addition, qualitative evidence suggests that the lone parents who remain engaged with the programme for six months or longer are those who are facing the most difficult challenges and who may not, in their current circumstances, be in a position to move into employment.

Table 4.19: Which of the following best applies to your status now?

All respondents to the follow-up survey still receiving support

	Count	Per cent
Not working and looking for work	77	48
Working 16 hours or more	21	13
Education/ Training	18	11
Not working and not looking for work	12	8
Volunteering	6	4
Caring	5	3
Unable to work	5	3
Working less than 16 hours	3	2
Self-employed	3	2
Work placement	2	1
Maternity Leave	1	1
Other	7	4
Total	160	100

Table 4.20: Length of time working

All respondents to the follow-up survey still receiving support and in work

	Weeks*				
	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Base
Working 16 hours or more	1	35	12	9	20
Working less than 16 hours	1	19	9	5	3
Self-employed	6	43	18	6	3

* Rounded to the nearest week

Table 4.21: Satisfaction with present job overall

All respondents to the follow-up survey still receiving support and in work

	Count	Per cent
1 - Completely dissatisfied	2	7
2 - Mostly dissatisfied	4	15
3 - Somewhat dissatisfied	1	4
4 - Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	1	4
5 - Somewhat satisfied	3	11
6 - Mostly satisfied	9	33
7 - Completely satisfied	7	26
Total	27	100

4.4. Support received - Follow-up responses

Tables 4.22 and 4.23 provide data on the types of support received by lone parents who were still supported by the MIW partnerships at the six month follow-up stage, and their views on the quality of the support received. The vast majority of lone parents had received key worker support and information and advice about jobs and careers. A majority had also received support in relation to personal development, childcare and practical issues. All respondents were positive about the support received, with 100 per cent rating the support very good or fairly good.

Table 4.22: Types of support received

<i>All respondents to the follow-up survey still receiving support</i>		
	Count	Per cent
One to one support (key worker, peer support, mentor)	152	95
Information, advice and guidance about jobs or careers	131	82
Advice on personal development (confidence building, goal setting etc.)	123	77
Childcare support (help to find or use childcare)	91	57
Support in addressing practical issues (debt, housing, transport)	90	56
Referral to other services (e.g. Jobcentre Plus, health services, social services, employability partnership, training providers)	59	37
Vocational skills training (training for a specific job)	54	34
Supporting in addressing personal issues (health, substance use, relationships)	51	32
Financial support (a grant or loan to help you find a job - e.g. buying suitable clothes)	42	26
Basic skills training (literacy, numeracy, IT)	23	14
Information, advice and guidance about self-employment	18	11
Counselling	11	7
Other	11	7
<i>Base</i>	160	

Table 4.23: Rating of support

<i>All respondents to the follow-up survey still receiving support</i>		
	Count	Per cent
Very good	147	92
Fairly good	12	8
Neither good nor poor	0	0
Fairly poor	0	0
Very poor	0	0
Don't know	0	0
Total	160	100

4.5. Impact - baseline and follow-up responses

Tables 4.24 to 4.29 assess the impact of the programme in terms of the 'distance travelled' by lone parents in overcoming the barriers they identified as problematic at the outset of their engagement with the MIW programme. Tables 4.24, 4.26, 4.28 look at overall change - i.e. the proportion of the sample at both baseline and follow-up stages giving responses to particular questions. Tables 4.25, 4.27, 4.29 and 4.32 demonstrate individual change - the degree to which the responses from individual lone parents have moved in a negative or positive direction or remained unchanged.

In terms of overall change, that data suggest that the MIW partnerships are having a positive impact on the proportions of lone parents reporting positively in relation to their skills (Table 4.24); confidence, self-esteem and motivation (Table 4.26); and perceptions in relation to barriers to employment (Table 4.28). There have been improvements in the majority of these indicators and a number of factors have improved by more than 20 percentage points. These include lone parents agreeing that they have good specific skills, the ability to do well at an interview, and the ability to put together a CV and an application; lone parents feeling that they have improved confidence, self-esteem, self-belief, self-respect, self-awareness and the ability to deal with nerves.

In terms of individual change, the responses of between 11 and 38 per cent of lone parents have moved in a positive direction across all indicators, with the exception of three: 'I have personal problems that need to be sorted out; I have a health condition or disability that limits the work I can do; I care for someone who has a health condition or disability that limits the amount of work I can do. The indicators where there has been most positive change at the individual level mirror those where there has been most absolute change: employment-related skills including interview and CV, and confidence and self-esteem.

Table 4.24: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Respondents who agree/strongly agree)

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Good basic skills (reading/ numbers)	677	81	144	90
The ability to show how my previous experience (including bringing up children) is valuable	653	78	147	92
An understanding of the skills employers are looking for in the kind of job I want	572	68	139	87
An understanding of the specific job or area of work that I am interested in	570	68	127	79
The ability to get a job when I am ready to return to work	537	64	133	83
Good specific skills for the kind of job I am looking for	466	56	122	76
Identified additional training that I want to take up	468	56	127	79
The ability to do well at an interview	387	46	120	75
The ability to put together a CV and an application	349	42	115	72
<i>Base</i>	<i>838</i>		<i>160</i>	

Table 4.25: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - Individual change*

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Negative change		No change		Positive change		Total	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
The ability to do well at an interview	8	5	86	57	58	38	152	100
The ability to put together a CV and an application	7	4	94	59	57	36	158	100
Good specific skills for the kind of job I am looking for	14	9	86	58	49	33	149	100
Identified additional training that I want to take up	19	12	90	59	44	29	153	100
An understanding of the skills employers are looking for in the kind of job I want	5	3	106	72	37	25	148	100
The ability to get a job when I am ready to return to work	8	5	113	72	37	23	158	100
An understanding of the specific job or area of work that I am interested in	14	9	105	69	33	22	152	100
The ability to show how my previous experience (including bringing up children) is valuable	7	4	130	83	20	13	157	100
Good basic skills (reading/ numbers)	2	1	139	87	19	12	160	100

*Positive change = respondents moving into the strongly agree/agree categories from neither agree nor disagree/disagree/strongly disagree categories (negative change = moving the other way)

Table 4.26: Please rate how confident or unconfident you are with the following sets of skills: (Respondents who stated very confident/confident)

<i>All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support</i>				
	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Reliability Time-keeping, meeting deadlines, taking responsibility, attendance	680	81	148	93
Working with others Teamwork, getting on with people, respecting others	620	74	145	91
Communication Speaking, listening, paying attention	587	70	132	83
Setting and achieving goals Motivation, planning and organising, problem-solving, hard work	503	60	126	79
Managing feelings Dealing with issues, coping, managing problems	442	53	108	68
Confidence Self-esteem, self-belief, self-respect, self-awareness, dealing with nerves	318	38	96	60
<i>Base</i>	<i>838</i>		<i>160</i>	

Table 4.27: Please rate how confident or unconfident you are with the following sets of skills: Individual change*

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Negative change		No change		Positive change		Total	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Confidence Self-esteem, self-belief, self-respect, self-awareness, dealing with nerves	11	7	92	58	57	36	160	100
Setting and achieving goals Motivation, planning and organising, problem-solving, hard work	7	4	103	65	49	31	159	100
Managing feelings Dealing with issues, coping, managing problems	16	10	100	63	44	28	160	100
Working with others Teamwork, getting on with people, respecting others	5	3	123	77	32	20	160	100
Communication Speaking, listening, paying attention	8	5	126	79	26	16	160	100
Reliability Time-keeping, meeting deadlines, taking responsibility, attendance	5	3	137	86	18	11	160	100

*Positive change = respondents moving into the very confident/confident categories from neither confident nor unconfident/unconfident/very unconfident categories (negative change = moving the other way)

Table 4.28: Thinking about some of the things that might affect your ability to find work, at the moment, are the following issues a big factor, a smaller factor or not a factor at all? (Respondents who stated 'Big factor')

<i>All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support</i>				
	Baseline		6 month follow-up	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
The jobs that are available are not flexible enough to fit around my family and/or caring responsibilities	440	53	56	35
There are not enough jobs that I want in the local area	388	46	58	36
The childcare that is available is not affordable	359	43	50	31
There isn't enough suitable childcare around here	324	39	41	26
I do not have family or close friends to help out	314	37	53	33
I am worried that I will not be better off in work or that I will lose the secure income provided by benefits	270	32	26	16
I have problems with transport to and from work	157	19	21	13
I do not want to leave my child/ren in the care of anyone other than my family or close friends while I work	132	16	22	14
I have personal or family problems that need to be sorted out	124	15	22	14
I have debt problems or other money issues that need to be sorted out	115	14	12	8
I have a health condition or disability that limits the work that I can do	57	7	11	7
I care for someone who has a health condition or disability that limits the amount of work that I can do	36	4	6	4
Base	160		160	

Table 4.29: Thinking about some of the things that might affect your ability to find work, at the moment, are the following issues a big factor, a smaller factor or not a factor at all? - Individual change

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Negative change		No change		Positive change		Total	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
The jobs that are available are not flexible enough to fit around my family and/or caring responsibilities	9	7	85	66	35	27	129	100
The childcare that is available is not affordable	4	3	87	70	33	27	124	100
There isn't enough suitable childcare around here	5	4	92	71	32	25	129	100
There are not enough jobs that I want in the local area	12	10	83	67	28	23	123	100
I am worried that I will not be better off in work or that I will lose the secure income provided by benefits	14	9	102	68	35	23	151	100
I have problems with transport to and from work	13	9	105	73	25	17	143	100
I do not have family or close friends to help out	11	7	125	79	22	14	158	100
I do not want to leave my child/ren in the care of anyone other than my family or close friends while I work	16	10	119	77	19	12	154	100
I have debt problems or other money issues that need to be sorted out	5	3	135	87	15	10	155	100
I have personal or family problems that need to be sorted out	11	7	133	85	13	8	157	100
I have a health condition or disability that limits the work that I can do	6	4	142	91	8	5	156	100
I care for someone who has a health condition or disability that limits the amount of work that I can do	1	1	153	98	2	1	156	100

*Positive change = respondents who previously stated an issue was a big factor who then gave smaller factor/not a factor at all as a response (negative change = moving the other way

)

Tables 4.30 and 4.31 assess changes in lone parents' responses in relation to satisfaction with various aspects of their lives. If responses rated 1-3 are taken to indicate dissatisfaction, the data show that there has been a very small increase in the proportion of lone parents reporting dissatisfaction with their health. In contrast there have been decreases in the proportions of lone parents reporting dissatisfaction with their incomes and lives overall. As would be anticipated, the proportions of lone parents reporting to be satisfied with these aspects of their lives (ratings 5, 6 and 7) have increased. There has been an increase of 17 percentage points in the numbers of lone parents reporting to be satisfied with the income of their household (perhaps reflecting the support delivered by MIW partnerships in relation to benefits and debt) and an increase of 14 percentage points in the numbers of respondents indicating that they are satisfied with their lives overall.

Table 4.30: On a scale of 1-7, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your current situation, where 1 = completely dissatisfied and 7 = completely satisfied? (Baseline responses)

All respondents to the baseline survey

	Your health		The income of your household		Your life overall	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
1	28	3	136	16	23	3
2	27	3	101	12	53	6
3	63	8	168	20	118	14
4	100	12	198	24	179	21
5	190	23	153	18	246	29
6	203	24	45	5	148	18
7	227	27	37	4	71	8
Total	838	100	838	100	838	100

Table 4.31: On a scale of 1-7, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your current situation, where 1 = completely dissatisfied and 7 = completely satisfied? (Follow-up responses)

All respondents to the follow-up survey still receiving support

	Your health		The income of your household		Your life overall	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
1	3	2	11	7	1	1
2	6	4	26	16	8	5
3	10	6	16	10	8	5
4	13	8	37	23	29	18
5	30	19	44	28	53	33
6	55	34	18	11	40	25
7	43	27	8	5	21	13
Total	160	100	160	100	160	100

Table 4.32: On a scale of 1-7, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your current situation, where 1 = completely dissatisfied and 7 = completely satisfied? - Individual change

All baseline respondents and respondents to the follow-up still receiving support

	Your health		The income of your household		Your life overall	
	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent	Count	Per cent
Negative change, 2+ steps	18	11	19	12	12	8
Negative change, 1 step	22	14	15	9	12	8
No change	61	38	42	26	37	23
Positive change, 1 step	35	22	51	32	59	37
Positive change, 2+ steps	24	15	33	21	40	25
Total	160	100	160	100	160	100

This chapter has looked at data from the baseline and follow-up client surveys to assess the characteristics and progress of lone parents who have been supported by the MIW partnerships. At the baseline stage the majority of lone parents had not worked for 12 months or more. 45 per cent of lone parents for whom follow-up surveys were received were no longer supported by the partnership. Around 20 per cent of lone parents who were not in contact with the partnerships at the six month follow-up period had moved into work or employment.

The data suggest that lone parents who are supported by the MIW partnerships at the six month follow-up survey are more likely to be older, and to report problems

with depression and stress. There have been improvements across almost all indicators, and the areas where lone parents report the largest improvements are in relation to employment related skills, interview skills and CV preparation; and in relation to their confidence and self-esteem.

The next chapter assesses the costs and benefits of the MIW programme, based on the data available.

5

Understanding the costs and benefits of the Making it Work Programme

A key consideration for the evaluation of the Making It Work Programme (MIW) is whether or not the delivery model(s) provide value for money (VFM). This means developing an understanding of the benefits of the programme and whether or not they can be considered economic, efficient and effective in relation to the costs.

This section discusses the relationship between MIW costs and benefits in the context of jobs and skills. This is because this is the area in which the evaluation and output and outcome evidence has been focussed to date. It shows that economic value of jobs and skills benefits is modest at stage of the intervention. However, it is important to note that the programme is performing broadly in line with the expectations of the funder in supporting lone parents who experience challenges engaging with mainstream services and who may be some distance from the labour market, and MIW was never intended solely as a programme which delivers a high number of job outcomes. Our qualitative work with lone parents and MIW partners presents a very strong case for the benefits of the MIW model and has demonstrated that many of the most important benefits lie beyond the narrow prism of jobs and skills in the areas of early intervention and prevention, and lead to wider outcomes such as improvements in health, well-being, self-efficacy and social capital. These outcomes have a range of fiscal, public and broader social value benefits for the different stakeholders in the MIW programme and it is important that the evaluation begins to capture additional evidence in these areas that enables to benefits to be valued more effectively. As such, the Evaluation Team propose that Year 3 of the evaluation is focused on gathering and analysing data which will support a more robust economic analysis. This will involve mapping outputs and outcomes in far greater detail at an individual level, and applying a much wider range of fiscal, public and social value proxies. It will also require impact (deadweight/attribution) and benefits periods to be estimated to ensure that the values of the longer-term benefits are also captured.

To ensure consistency, the analysis presented in this section is primarily based on cost and output data for the most recent project year (i.e. 2014/15). In some cases, where data is missing or unclear, this has meant producing estimates based on weighted averages (mean) for the programme. At this stage therefore, the findings presented should be considered illustrative of the costs and benefits of MIW, rather than a full and accurate reflection.

5.1. Understanding the costs of MIW

The total cost of delivering MIW can be understood as the amount of project funding provided by BIG, in combination with any additional funding received (i.e. from other statutory and non-statutory sources) and any in-kind support received (i.e. free/discounted use of office or meeting space, other facilities, equipment etc.). MIW partnerships are asked to submit this information to the Evaluation Team on annual basis as part of their monitoring data returns. The total figures for 2014/15 are provided in table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Costs of delivering the MIW programme (2014/15)*

	Estimated Cost
Total value of MIW project funding in 14/15 (£)	£2,555,730
Total value of any additional funding in 14/15 (£)	£45,962
Total value of in-kind support in 14/15 (£)	£157,467
Total	£2,759,159

*One partnership did not provide data on their funding received. At this stage this has been estimated based the average funding provided to the other four projects but the figure will be revised with more accurate data in due course.

This shows that in addition to the £2.5 million provided by BIG last year MIW projects secured an additional £0.2 million from other sources such as local authorities. This means that for every pound (£1) of funding provided by BIG MIW partners secured an addition eight pence (£0.08) in additional funding of income and in-kind and support.

5.2. Valuing the benefits of MIW to date: jobs and skills

To date, the quantitative elements of the evaluation have focussed on collecting data on jobs and skills outputs and outcomes for lone parents receiving support through MIW partnerships. Data on jobs and skills is available from two sources: the annual monitoring returns from each partnership and the longitudinal surveys completed by lone parents. This data can be combined with different types of financial proxy to produce a series of 'value estimates' for the jobs and skills benefits identified.

MIW jobs and skills outputs

A first step in the process is to understand the number of jobs and skills outputs and outcomes experienced by MIW beneficiaries. A summary of key evaluation is provided in table 5.2. Note that the survey data (n=292) is used as the basis for an extrapolated estimate for the total number of 2014/15 beneficiaries experiencing an output or outcome. This assumes that the survey respondents are representative of MIW beneficiaries as a whole.

Table 5.2: Overview of MIW job and skills output and outcome data (2014/15)

	All MIW beneficiaries	
	Number	Percent
Monitoring Data:		
Jobs		
Number of lone parents gaining part-time employment	31	2%
Number of lone parents gaining full-time employment	267	15%
Skills/Training		
Number of lone parents obtaining non-accredited training outcomes	283	16%
Number of lone parents obtaining accredited training outcomes	425	23%
Number of lone parents receiving basic skills support	708	39%
Survey Data:		
Jobs		
Proportion of lone parents who left the programme after finding work	72	4%
Proportion of lone parents who left the programme after starting full-time education	72	4%
Proportion of lone parents still with the programme but working less than 16 hours	18	1%
Proportion of lone parents still with the programme but working more than 16 hours	127	7%
Proportion of lone parents still with the programme but self-employed	0	0%
Proportion of lone parents still with the programme and volunteering	36	2%
Proportion of lone parents still with the programme and on a work placement	18	1%
Skills/Training		
Proportion of lone parents still with the programme in education/training	109	6%

These data can be used to generate a series of headline job and skills indicators that form the basis for a simple value for money and cost-benefit analysis of the MIW programme (table 5.3). As there are some variations in job output/outcomes between the monitoring and survey data maxima and minima values are provided for each indicator.

Table 5.3: Headline output/outcome indicators for MIW cost-benefit analysis (2014/15)

	Estimated number of MIW Beneficiaries	
	Min	Max
Jobs		
Number of lone parents gaining employment (less than 16 hours)	18	31
Number of lone parents gaining employment (more than 16 hours)	199	267
Total number of lone parents gaining employment	217	298
Skills/Training		
Number of lone parents with a training outcome (non-accredited)	-	283
Number of lone parents with a training outcome (accredited)	-	425

Economy and efficiency: costs per output/outcome

The next stage in the process involves understanding how economic and efficient the MIW programme is in the context of each output/outcome. This simply involves dividing the total cost of delivering the programme by the each output/outcome, the result of which is presented in table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Cost per headline MIW output/outcome (2014/15)

	Cost per output/outcome	
	Min	Max
Jobs		
Number of lone parents gaining employment (less than 16 hours)	£153,287	£89,005
Number of lone parents gaining employment (more than 16 hours)	£13,865	£10,334
Total number of lone parents gaining employment	£12,715	£9,259
Skills/Training		
Number of lone parents with a training outcome (non-accredited)		£9,750
Number of lone parents with a training outcome (accredited)		£6,492

This suggests that MIW is more expensive than 'mainstream' back to work schemes. The Flexible New Deal is understood to have cost £7,495 per job; Employment Zones are estimated to have cost £7,857 per job; and the New Deal for Young People/25 plus is estimated to have cost £3,321 per job². In addition, the Working for Families Fund estimated a cost per 'hard' outcome or 'transition' (which includes employment and training outcomes) of £2,022 in the final year of the programme (2008)³. However, it should be noted that these programmes do not offer a direct

² ERSA analysis of job start data (November 2012)

http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:ebn5WYHGPR8J:ersa.org.uk/system/files_force/ERSA%2520Job%2520Start%2520data_0.pdf+&cd=10&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk

³ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2009/04/20092521/6>

comparison. Their aims and delivery models are very different to MIW, as are the client groups targeted by them. The relatively high costs of MIW might be anticipated given the objective of the programme to support lone parents in complex circumstances, and they reflect the intensive nature of MIW support interventions (discussed at Chapter 3) rather than any specific inefficiency.

Effectiveness: the value of job and skills outputs/outcome

A more useful approach to understanding the value for money of MIW interventions, therefore, involves measuring effectiveness and calculating the value of job and skills outputs/outcomes. This requires appropriate financial proxies to be identified and appended to the output/outcome figures. Different types of financial proxy can be used to capture different aspects of benefit value. For example:

- through the **fiscal benefits**: these are direct and indirect savings to the public sector associated with the output/outcome
- through the **public value benefits**: these measure the overall value to society and includes net growth in the local economy allowing for deadweight, leakage and wider social benefits such as improvements to health; educational attainment; access to transport or public services; safety; or reduced crime.

Examples of financial proxies that can be used to value each type of benefit are provided in table 5 with the result of applying these proxies to the headline MIW output/outcome data presented in table 6.

Table 5.5: Financial proxies⁴ for each MIW output/outcome (2014/15)

	Measure	Fiscal Value	Public Value
Jobs			
Number of lone parents gaining employment (less than 16 hours)	N/A: no benefit identified	-	-
Number of lone parents gaining employment (more than 16 hours)	Job Seeker's Allowance: Fiscal and economic benefit from a workless claimant entering work	£10,321	£14,790
Total number of lone parents gaining employment			
Skills/Training			
Number of lone parents with a training outcome (non-accredited)	N/A: no benefit identified	-	-
Number of lone parents with a training outcome (accredited)	NVQ Level 2 Qualification: annual fiscal and economic benefit of attaining the qualification	£90	£483

⁴ The financial proxies used in this analysis are based on the New Economy Unit Cost Database: http://neweconomymanchester.com/stories/1966-cost_benefit_analysis

Table 6: Estimated annual value of benefits for each MIW output/outcome (2014/15)

	Fiscal Value		Public Value	
	<i>Total value</i>	<i>ROI</i>	<i>Total value</i>	<i>ROI</i>
<i>Jobs</i>				
Number of lone parents gaining employment (less than 16 hours)	-	-	-	-
Number of lone parents gaining employment (more than 16 hours)	Min: £2.05m	Min: £0.74	Min: £2.94m	Min: £1.07
Total number of lone parents gaining employment	Max: £2.76m	Max: £1.00	Max: £3.95m	Max: £1.42
<i>Skills/Training</i>				
Number of lone parents with a training outcome (non-accredited)	-	-	-	-
Number of lone parents with a training outcome (accredited)	£0.04m	£0.01	£0.2m	£0.07

These estimates suggest that the value of the jobs and skills benefits associated with MIW is relatively low when compared to the costs of delivering the programme. Taking the maximum estimate, the annual fiscal value job benefits (i.e. savings to the public sector) are broadly equivalent to the costs whilst the annual public value job benefits provide a positive return on investment of around 42 pence for each pound (£1) of funding awarded. The fiscal and public value skills benefits are much lower however, and do not provide a positive return on investment.

The limits of the evidence base: assessing impact and projecting the benefit period

In interpreting the cost-benefit analysis presented here it is important to recognise a number of important limitations to the evidence base. These fall into two categories: insufficient evidence about impact (i.e. deadweight/attribution) and insufficient evidence about how long the benefits last. As such it has not been possible to project the discounted value of benefits beyond the first year of the project, something which would inevitably increase the overall value of the benefits and the associated return on investment.

This chapter has outlined current data on the costs and benefits of the MIW programme. It has suggested that, on the basis of data which captures skills and job outcomes, the MIW programme appears relatively high cost and low value. However, this data needs to be considered in the context of the overall aims and objectives of the programme, which are to support lone parents with complex needs who are facing considerable challenges in engaging with support agencies and the wider labour market. Client survey data and qualitative evidence (outlined in Chapters 2 and 3) presents a very strong picture in terms of the benefits of the intensive support delivered to lone parents through the MIW partnerships. A next phase of the economic analysis is to work with the MIW partnerships to consolidate this evidence and to gather detailed information on the nature and costs of the support delivered to individuals, in order to gain a fuller understanding of the value of the wider benefits.

Conclusions and learning points

This report has reviewed evidence from the second year of the Making it Work learning and evaluation contract, drawing on reports for each of the five MIW partnerships to provide an assessment of the progress and impact of MIW at the programme level.

The evidence suggests that MIW partnerships have continued to provide intensive, genuinely personalised support for lone parents who are facing significant challenges in returning to work and whose needs are not met by mainstream provision. The personalised and choice-based approach of MIW is valued by lone parents, and the support model, which complements existing employability provision by targeting the early stages of the employability pipeline has enabled lone parents to make significant progress towards sustainable employment and is delivering positive outcomes for lone parents and their families. The emphasis within the programme on targeting fair and productive work opportunities is a distinctive feature of the programme and differentiates it from the 'work first' approach of mainstream provision.

On the basis of the current available evidence it would appear that the value of jobs and skills associated with MIW is modest. However, the programme is performing in line with the expectations of the funder in terms of these outcomes and it is unlikely that the data analysed here capture either the true costs or the total benefits associated with the integrated support model delivered through MIW. Further evaluation work over the remaining two years of the programme will explore these issues further.

There are ongoing challenges for the MIW programme including the need for closer integration with mainstream employability provision, whilst maintaining key aspects of MIW such a flexible support, and childcare and group work. There is also a need to continue to engage with employers to promote lone parents as employees and to combat under-employment and encourage flexible shift-working. And moving forward, MIW partnerships will need to give attention to locating their offer within the patchwork of local partnerships in order to make, and maintain, a strong case for ongoing funding.

The evidence contained in this report suggests a number of learning points in relation to what has 'worked well' in supporting lone parents. These include

- Bringing together complementary expertise into broad-based partnerships which provide support across a range of issues including client engagement and

personalised support, employability advice, money advice and financial management, and other services of value to lone parents.

- Building multiple alliances which enable partnerships to provide genuinely flexible and demand-led approach to support and the provision of 'wraparound' support that opens doors and removes non-employment specific barriers to entering work.
- A distinctive and complementary content which fills a gap in provision and has a clear focus on supporting disadvantaged lone parents and those further from the labour market.
- High quality development/ key worker support which builds confidence and addresses practical issues, and is aligned to focused employability support, can deliver rapid progression.
- Group-based and vocational activity as a route to integration and employability. During 2014-15, MIW has developed group-based activities which have the potential to build social capital, address isolation and provide access to peer support for lone parents.
- A clear ethos of empowerment and coproduction, which is valued by MIW clients and which differentiates MIW from mainstream provision is contributing to sustainable outcomes.