

SPEAR

2025

Impact Report



Reaching more young people through Spear has never been more crucial.

“Spear gave me a reason to show up – for myself and my future.” La’Seye was homeless and jobless before Spear. Now thriving in work, she urges businesses to “take a chance on a Spear trainee”.

Young people in the UK are facing a crisis of hope: half of those not working or studying feel hopeless (p14). Vacancies in hospitality and retail have plummeted, and as Nathan, a Spear Leeds trainee, told the BBC, many businesses prefer candidates with experience. Nearly 1 million young people not earning or learning represents a loss to themselves and billions to the UK economy (p8). Our rebrand from Resurgo to Spear reflects our focus on launching more centres and unleashing that potential.

We support young people who’ve faced adversity. With the right support, their resilience becomes a superpower employers value.

In 2025, our streamlined Spear model helped us reach a record 1,176 young people in high-need areas and now accounts for a third of all trainees. Across all centres, 90% of Spear completers are still in touch a year later, and over 70% move into work or study.

This year, we plan to open three new centres, including our first in the Midlands, while stepping up advocacy (p18) to bring to government initiatives our experience of what works.

Thank you for your support. Together, I believe we can unleash the potential in this next generation.

Iona Ledwidge, CEO



As we reflect on 2025, it’s a good moment to return to the fundamental question that drives our work: are we bringing about lasting impact for the young people who need us most?

I’m glad we can give a confident “yes” to the question above – more young people, in more locations, supported into more positive futures.

2025 was also a year of learning and investing for future impact. Alongside opening two new Spear Centres in York and St Helens, we launched a Northern Regional Hub in Leeds to act as a centre of excellence for local centres, and created a Quality and Development team (see page 30) to invest more deeply in our coaching teams.

As we continue to build, we’re grateful to be part of an incredible group of individuals and organisations all playing their part.

Thanks for joining us on the journey.

Pete Bacon, Director of Programmes & Impact (Deputy CEO)




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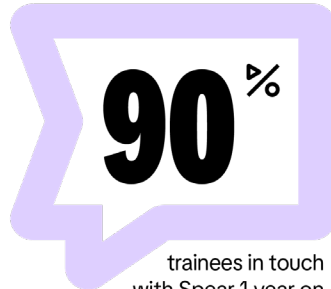
OUR IMPACT IN NUMBERS

Over
70 %

Spear completers in work
or study 1 year on

1,176


trainees coached in 2025

90 %


trainees in touch
with Spear 1 year on

3.5


work barriers per trainee

18

Spear Centres

11,676



young people
supported since launch



employer partners



referral organisations

30%



trainees had been
jobless over 1 year

corporate volunteers



Our history



2003

Our vision is born

2010

We join the Impetus portfolio

2013

We win the Guardian Charity Awards

2016

We win an ERSA and Great Place to Work Award

2004

We run the first Spear Programme and we are constituted as a charitable company

2012

We welcome award-winning comedian, actor and writer, Miranda Hart on board as our Ambassador

2014

We complete a vigorous Theory of Change workshop with David Hunter Consulting

2017

We complete an external evaluation of the Spear Programme with the Tavistock Institute
We win the Princess Royal Training Award



PRINCESS ROYAL
TRAINING AWARD

2018

We launch Spear Brighton, our eighth location and first outside London

Resurgo Consulting is born

2021

We win the Princess Royal Training Award Covid Commendation for our training response to the pandemic

2023

20 years!

2025

Spear launches in York and St Helens, taking our total to 18 across England and Wales

We reach the milestone of supporting 11,000 young people since the Spear Programme started

2020

We take our work online, and launch Re-Work, to support adults made unemployed in the wake of Covid19

2022

We design, test and launch a streamlined version of Spear in Preston

We undergo rigorous benchmarking by the Department for Work and Pensions' Data Lab

2024

We are named one of The Sunday Times Best Places to Work

We are named ERSA Youth Employment Provider of the Year

2026

We rebrand from Resurgo to Spear, in line with our strategy to be wholly focused on the Spear Programme

THE SUNDAY TIMES
**Best Places
to Work 2024**

Why Spear exists

Spear, formerly known as Resurgo, is a youth employment charity. Through the Spear Programme, we coach young people to overcome the barriers they're facing so they can thrive in work and life.

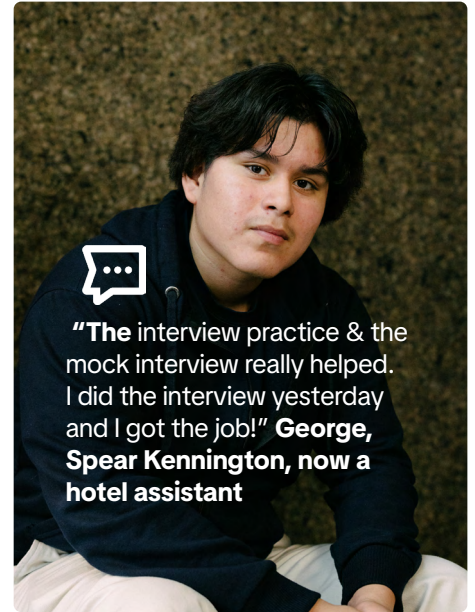
An estimated 957,000 young people are not in education, employment or training (NEET) in the UK.

And a quarter of unemployed NEETs have been seeking work for more than a year. This represents a huge cost to young people and to society, and it's getting worse.

Currently, 12.8% of those aged 16-24 are NEET. The total has risen 2.1 percentage points since before the pandemic.

Employment charity Impetus found that this post-pandemic surge has cost the UK economy £21 billion in lost GDP.

This outcome is not inevitable. **Spear exists to unleash the potential of these young people: over 70% of those who complete Spear are in work or study a year later.**



"The interview practice & the mock interview really helped. I did the interview yesterday and I got the job!" George, Spear Kennington, now a hotel assistant

"Spear has been a pioneer in proving its impact on long-term employment outcomes in the UK, for the groups that need it most. Spear's outcomes have held up despite the challenging jobs market for young people in 2025/26." Chiku Bernardi, Deputy Portfolio Director, Impetus



1 in 8

people aged 16-24 not in work or study

Over 70%

of Spear completers in work or study a year later

The scarring effect

Being out of work or education has a “scarring effect” on a young person’s prospects that can stay with them for decades.

Those who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) at age 18-19 are 20% more likely to be unemployed a decade later, according to [research commissioned by the Department for Education](#).

Spending time unemployed under age 23 is also linked to lower wages



even two decades later, based on a study published in 2015 which concludes: “The concern is that these young people may end up as a lost generation and then it is too late.”

This is why early intervention through programmes such as Spear is so critical.

Alan Milburn, chair of the government’s Young People and Work review, recently said: “45% of 24-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training have never had a job. If you haven’t had a job by 24, that entails a long-term scarring effect and you’re probably then stuck in a lifetime on benefits.”

6 months NEET

After this time, wellbeing drops
(King's Trust TK Maxx Youth Index 2025)

2 in 3

Spear completers with mental health challenges are in work or study a year later

Our vision

Every young person in the UK, regardless of background, fulfilling their unique potential and contributing to society

Our mission

To inspire and equip young people to overcome the barriers they're facing to enter and sustain employment



Our coaching: High challenge, high support

Our coaching approach equips Spear trainees to have agency over their own lives – to make changes themselves, with lasting impact.

Trainees each have, on average, 3.5 barriers to work: low qualifications or growing up in care, for example. But with coaching, they come to recognise their strengths and gain the practical skills they need for a career.

The programme uses executive-level coaching techniques. This puts young people in the driving seat and provides a safe space to try new skills.

Feedback is tailored to each trainee and followed by support that empowers them to grow. After the initial four-to-six weeks of group and individual coaching, we'll stay with them for up to a year as they step into work or study.

Our impact principles

Our data and 20 years' work with 11,676 young people tell us that the executive coaching approach is effective. But we keep measuring our impact, to ensure we're always adapting and improving.

Over 70% of all completers are in work or study a year later; we know our figures are reliable as we're in touch with over 90% of completers.

In 2025, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions spoke in Parliament about [Spear's evaluation by the government's Data Lab](#) in 2022, which found Spear was highly effective.

This evaluation, along with [benchmarking by the charity Impetus](#) (2020) and other studies mean the Spear Programme is one of the best-evidenced interventions in the sector (see "What we learned" p30).

"A trainee told me about a disagreement he had with a peer. When I challenged him to listen to his own words, he realised he was talking like a child, not an adult. He then chose to work with this peer in the next task."

Paul Edet, Centre Manager, Spear North Kensington



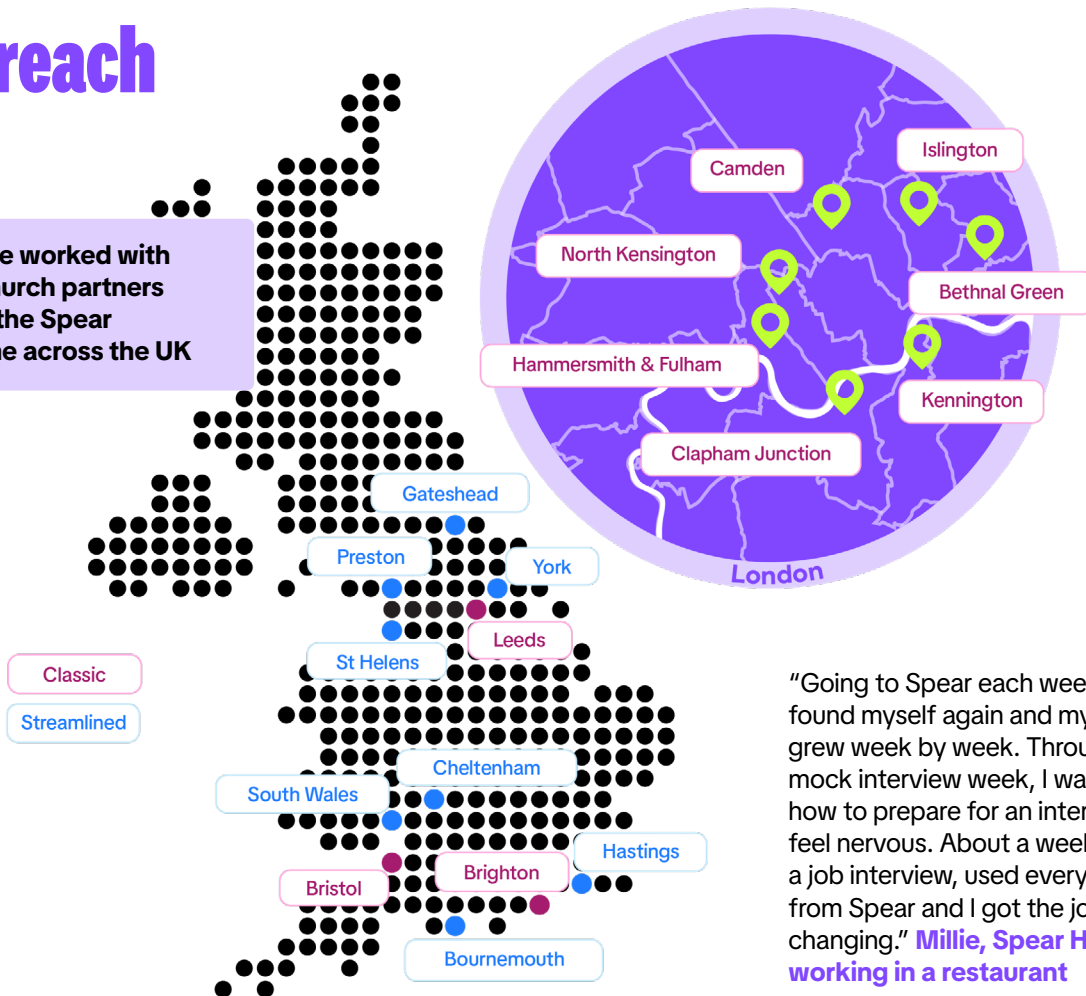
"If someone is struggling with something that feels quite inherent – 'This is me, I have anxiety and cannot do that' – you bring challenge so it's not limiting on them."

Ness Morse, Centre Manager, Spear Hastings



Our reach

In 2025, we worked with 18 local church partners to deliver the Spear Programme across the UK



“Going to Spear each week, I slowly found myself again and my confidence grew week by week. Through Spear’s mock interview week, I was able to learn how to prepare for an interview and not feel nervous. About a week later I went for a job interview, used everything I learnt from Spear and I got the job. Spear is life changing.” **Millie, Spear Hastings, now working in a restaurant**

How Spear works

Young people have energy, ambition and untapped talent – they just need the right support to channel it.

[The award-winning Spear Programme](#) uses executive-level coaching to equip young people to break down barriers and thrive in work and life. It's free for young people to attend, and around half are referred by local Jobcentres.

Spear Foundation is 4-6 weeks of group and 1:1 coaching. That's just the beginning. **Spear Career** follows with a further 6-12 months of 1:1 support.

The programme is codified to ensure quality is consistent across all our Spear Centres, with our expert coaches adapting to local contexts, and tailoring their approach to each trainee's individual needs.

Spear is delivered in partnership with local churches, rooted in community and open to all, regardless of faith.

1. We recruit

Every Spear Centre works with local referrers such as Jobcentres to identify young people most in need of the Spear Programme.



15 trainees per cohort



10 trainees per cohort

Classic

Streamlined



2. We coach Spear Foundation

Coaches equip young people with the skills and resilient mindset they need to be ready for work or study. Sessions include mock interviews and communicating professionally.

6 weeks

in groups and 1:1s

4 weeks

in groups and 1:1s



3. We support Spear Career

Trainees receive targeted follow-on support to help them gain independence and move into work or study. We partner with employers to place trainees into quality roles.

12 months

follow-on support

6 months

follow-on support

What do young people say?

We know that young people have huge potential. Sadly, they are doubting they have what employers want.

26% of young people not in work or education feel they know what employers are looking for **Youth Voice Census, 2025**

74% of young people say they value work experience and it helps them understand work – but just 26% of those at school or university did any in the past year **Youth Voice Census, 2025**

Half of NEET 16–25-year-olds feel hopeless about their future due to being unemployed **The King's Trust TK Maxx Youth Index 2025**

25% believe employers are supportive of hiring young people – down from 31% in 2024 **Youth Voice Census, 2025**

Sources: [Youth Voice Census 2025](#), [Youth Employment UK \(age 11–30\)](#); [The King's Trust TK Maxx Youth Index 2025 \(age 16–25\)](#)



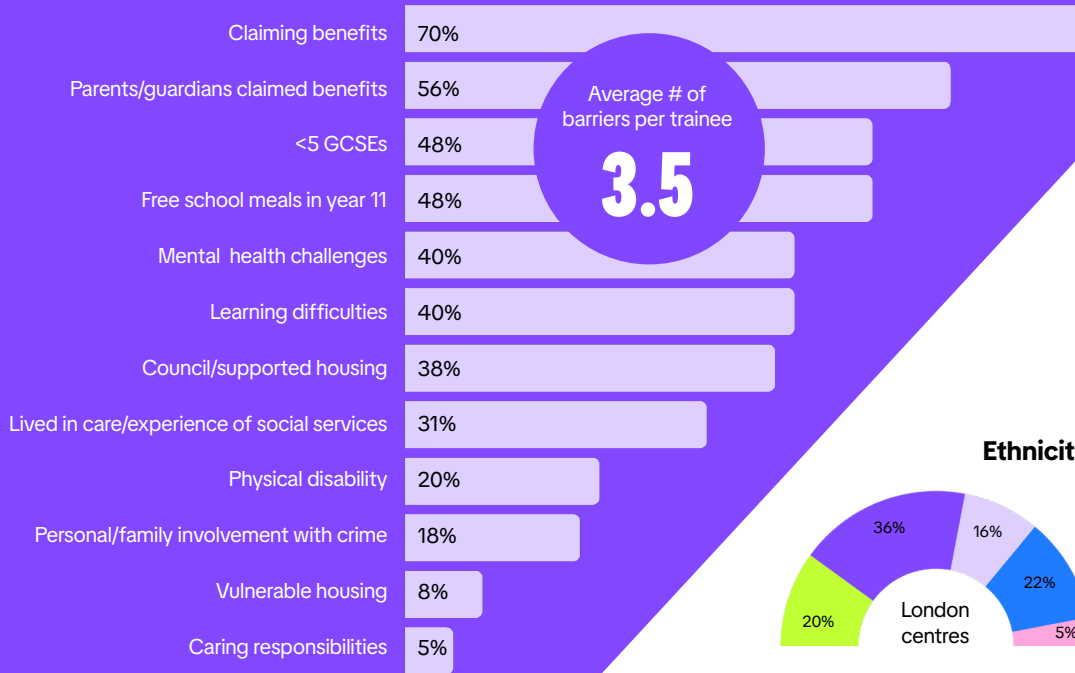
"They'd rather have people with experience... instead of employing younger people and giving them a chance." **Nathan, Spear Leeds**

"We grow into motivated and loyal individuals and especially within a company that's taken that chance with us...it's the best thing as a Spear trainee." **La'Seye, Spear Hammersmith, now a clinic receptionist** (see p21)

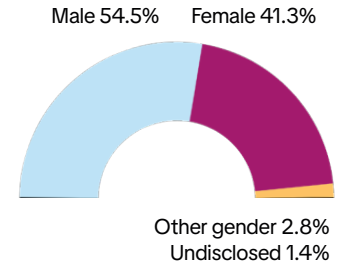
Who do we work with?

The Spear Programme exists for people aged 16–24 who aren't in education, employment or training (NEET) and are facing at least one barrier to getting work; 30% of our trainees have been out of work for more than a year.

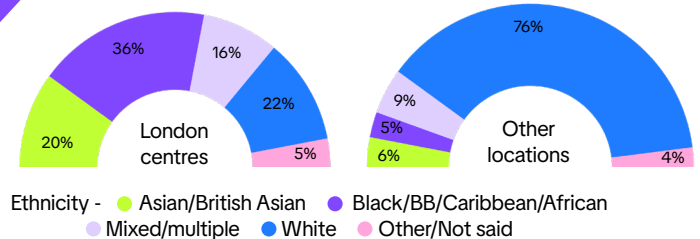
Nearly half (49%) of our referrals are from Jobcentres. The rest come from social services, the Probation Service, mental health services, other charities, family members and online searches.



Gender of trainees



Ethnicity of trainees



Bailey's story

Before Spear my life was feeling very hopeless. I was applying to jobs for several hours a day and not hearing any responses. I actually got to the point where I had given up and I was only doing the odd job application...because it felt like a waste of time since I would never even get a rejection letter.



Spear made a huge difference to my life. I felt I had forgotten how to socialise with people and I didn't believe in myself. Once I started going to Spear it built up my confidence again and made me realise that I wasn't as alone as I thought...and I shouldn't be ashamed of how I was feeling. I managed to then get my job through the Spear Hire Me event.

I'm now an apprentice at the Royal Parks, working in Regent's Park as a landscape gardener. I never expected to be doing this but the great thing about Spear is it made me apply for any type of job so **I ended up finding something I love even though I wasn't expecting it.**



A wider impact: What the UK needs to change



This year we increased our engagement with the government on youth employment policy, as part of a new strategy to widen our impact.

After more than two decades of seeing young people break through barriers and move into work or education, we knew we had insights that could contribute to better outcomes for young people across the UK. And we wanted to explore potential support from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) as we seek to launch Spear Centres in areas of high need.

In June, we met the then-Minister for Employment, Alison McGovern, and shared what we've seen working well for young people facing barriers to employment. This led to regular discussions with DWP officials.

We have consistently urged the government to be led more by evidence of what works when allocating funding – for example, through its Youth Guarantee trailblazer initiatives – and when referring young people to support via Jobcentres.

Centre Manager Grace King with Joe Powell MP and Spear CEO Iona Ledwidge at Spear North Kensington

In November, the government announced it would investigate the rise in “economic inactivity” among young people. We were pleased to be able to submit evidence to The Independent Report into Young People and Work, led by former health secretary Alan Milburn.

Two MPs, Joe Powell (Kensington & Bayswater) and Rushanara Ali (Bethnal Green & Stepney), visited their local Spear Centres.

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Pat McFadden, cited in Parliament Spear’s highly positive evaluation by his department’s Data Lab.





**Spear gave me
a reason to show up for
myself and my future**

What is life like for Spear trainees?

La'Seye was 17 years old when she became a carer for her baby brother. Her mother was struggling to cope. La'Seye got married, but then her relationship broke down. She became homeless and had no work.

Then she found Spear. "It gave me a reason to show up for myself and my future."

Now La'Seye is a receptionist at a clinic in London, pursuing the career that she wanted. She's now a Spear Ambassador, promoting Spear to supporters and other young people.



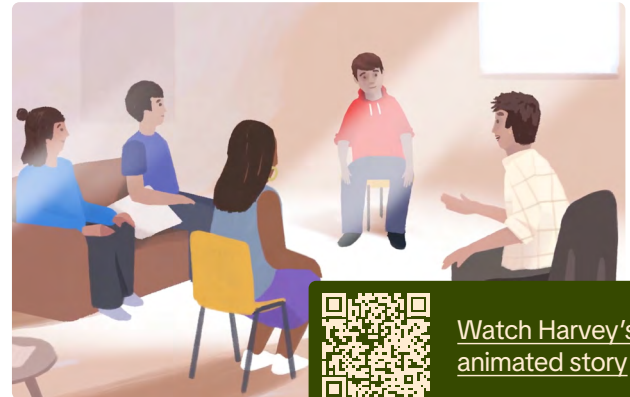
[Watch La'Seye tell her story, in her own words](#)

In Harvey's early teens, he lost his mother and he turned to alcohol and drugs. By the age of 18, he'd left school with few qualifications and had a son.

Harvey wanted to support his young family but he received rejection after rejection when applying for jobs.

He turned to Spear. "**It felt like a positivity room...They didn't judge me.**"

After Spear, Harvey got an apprenticeship at Nando's and moved into a flat with his partner and their son. He's retaking his maths and English GCSEs and aiming for promotion. Spear changed the course of Harvey's life.



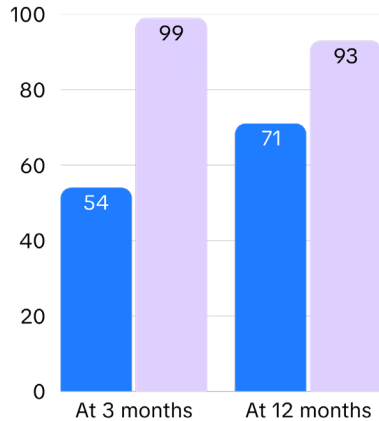
[Watch Harvey's animated story](#)

Our outcomes: Classic model

71% of those who complete the classic programme not only get into work or education, but are still there a year later.

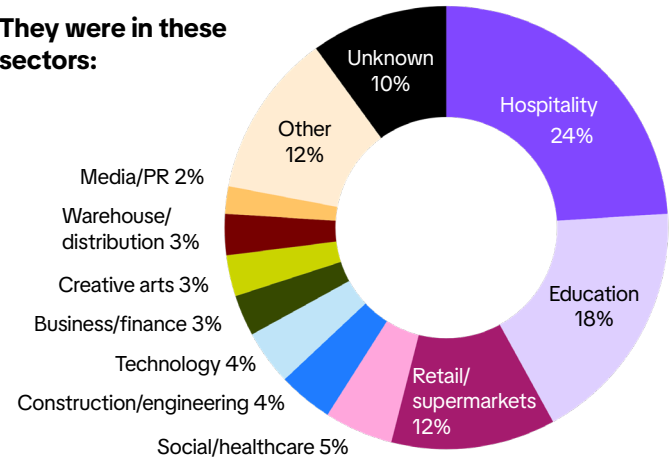
% of Spear completers who are:

- EET (in employment, education or training)
- In touch with Spear



In 2025, our trainees across both programme models secured 1,316 employment and education opportunities (up from 1,215 the previous year).

They were in these sectors:



Through improved data-gathering, we've halved the number of opportunities listed as unknown, and we'll continue to work on this in 2026 to give us even better insight.

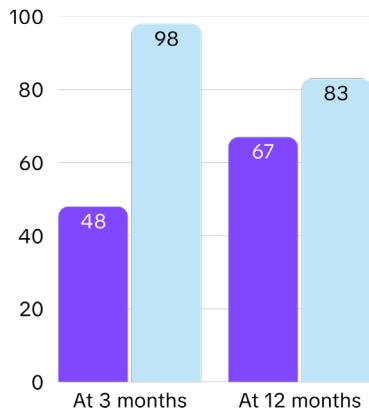
When young people take up a training opportunity within a relevant sector, that's shown in the sector.

Our outcomes: Streamlined model

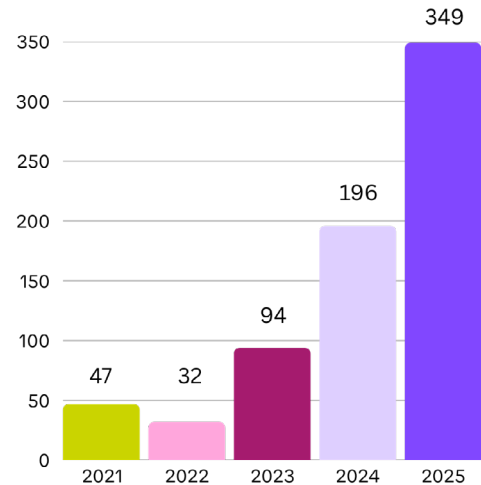
Our streamlined model is a lower-input, lower-cost version of Spear which allows us to reach areas of high need and lower resources and support more young people overall. The initial stage of intensive coaching is four weeks, instead of six. Follow-on support is six months, instead of 12.

% of Spear completers who are:

- EET (in employment, education or training)
- In touch with Spear



Number of trainees enrolled on streamlined per year



In 2025, 30% of our trainees enrolled at a streamlined centre. We're on track with our impact evaluation of the streamlined model (see 2024 report, p25). We're currently in our internal evaluation phase, paying careful attention to how consistently we deliver, and monitoring outcomes.

Spear reaches “the hidden”

In the UK, virtually all government support for young people who aren't working or in education is delivered via the benefits system.

But up to half of those aged 18-24 who aren't in work or education aren't claiming any benefits, according to research by the Youth Futures Foundation.

Being “hidden” from the system in this way means it's harder for these young people to access state support for moving into work or learning.

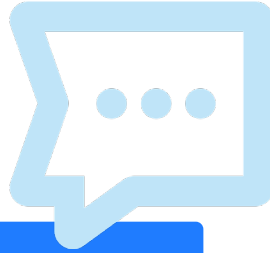
Our Spear Centres build and nurture a range of local referral partners – probation officers, surgeries, social workers and other charities – which means that we can reach young people the government is missing.

On Spear, 29% of young people who enrolled in 2025 weren't claiming benefits and had no Jobcentre advisor – up from 26% the previous year. This “hidden” group get into work or education at a slightly higher rate than the average Spear trainee: we're looking at why this is.



“Spear is the best thing I've ever done...I still feel scared, but I feel excited too, because I know that I do have a good future ahead of me.” **Lacye, Spear Leeds, now works at a football club**

Levi's story



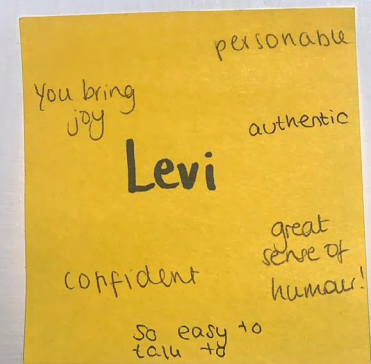
Being [at Spear] with everyone going through similar things helped me come out of a slump of not feeling worth anything in society.

After being inspired in a one-to-one with my Spear coach, Leo, she gave me a sticky note with words people associate with my character. One of the phrases was, 'You bring joy'.

I put it on my door right underneath a portrait of me in primary school smiling with big white teeth. It's like, look how far you've come.

We did mock interview practice, and touched up our CVs. I was in a flow state - applying for lots of jobs. A few days later, I got an email inviting me to an interview and trial shift. I enjoyed what I was doing. That broke the mindset of asking '**Do you have a place in society?**' **I do, I absolutely do.**

Levi, Spear Hammersmith and Fulham



Corporate and employer partnerships

Our corporate partners not only support us financially but give many Spear trainees their first taste of professional life.

Company visits, external Q&A panels and mock interviews are the chance for trainees to put into practice the employability skills they've learned on the Spear Programme.

Employer partners, who hire Spear trainees, consistently tell us they are among their best employees: reliable and resilient.

"With a mock interview... the trainees will do one interview, we'll give them the feedback, and then they'll do another. And you can just see the progress... and that is just amazing to get to witness first hand."

Kian Gheissari, Vice President, Sales and Strategic Partnerships, State Street



"The reason we partner with the Spear Programme is because we're getting great people, we're getting great retention, and it is truly life-changing." **Jess Jones, Nando's Community Employability Lead**

150+

Spear trainees hired by Nando's so far

£600,000

DHL UK Foundation grant to Spear

155

Spear trainees funded by Landsec

Hired! Trainees thriving at employer partners

Nando's - Nando's hired 70 Spear trainees at 15 Spear Centres in 2025 and pledged to hire 140 more in 2026. Epphina began working at Nando's last year and is managed by Rocky, who started after Spear in 2023.



Epphina: "Spear changed my life. It's given me a boost as a whole person. It's given colour to my life. I can pay my own bills. Buy my own clothes. I now have independence."

Rocky: "Within six months, I became a supervisor..."

"And then [after] a year and a half, I became a second assistant manager with big roles and responsibilities in my restaurant."

Bunzl - In 2025, the distribution and services group Bunzl hired its first Spear trainee, Priya. The partnership has grown since 2023, when Bunzl employees first volunteered to help Spear trainees with interview practice.



Landsec - In June, the commercial property business Landsec and Spear set a goal: 10 Spear trainees to be hired from Leeds, Camden and other Spear Centres to secure roles within Landsec's supply chain and brand partners by March 2026. The target was hit by November 2025.

In 2025









163 trainees hired by

27 employer partners

Our 2025 goals

We set 6 ambitious goals for the first year of our 3-year strategy

Priority	Goal	Achieved	Traffic light status
Accelerate the growth of Spear	Open 2-3 streamlined Spear Centres outside London, prioritising the north of England, to reach more young people	We opened 2 streamlined centres in the north of England: York and St Helens	
Explore an alternative funding model	Financially support new and existing Spear Centres by trialling a new funding model with at least two corporate or individual donors	This has proved to be more challenging and remains a work-in-progress going into 2026	
Design a regional hub model	Open our first regional hub in the north of England, to better support and equip more local streamlined Spear Centres	We opened a Northern Regional Hub as a centre of excellence in Leeds, supporting our northern Spear Centres	
Sustain Spear's quality and reach	We aimed for 75% of those who complete our classic Spear model and 60% of those on our streamlined model, to be EET after a year	In 2025 our streamlined model was over target at 69%, while our classic model was slightly under target at 71%	
Evaluate our streamlined model	Continue building the evidence base of our streamlined version of Spear, to assess its impact	Our interim evaluation found 68% of all streamlined completers to date were in work or study after a year (vs 60% target). We raised the target to 65%. We'll monitor as we roll out this model further	
Refresh our brand	Update our vision and raise our visibility in line with our ambition to become a national charity	We completed our rebrand in 2025, with a full launch in January 2026. As part of this, we changed our operating name from Resurgo to Spear. We achieved record press coverage in 2025, appearing in 10 national media items in November alone	

Our 2026 goals

As we move into the second year of our 3-year strategy, our 2026 goals build on our work from last year

1

Accelerate the growth of Spear to reach more young people

2

Sustain the quality and reach of Spear

3

Continue to develop a new fundraising model and assess how far this can be rolled out to support different centre models

4

Continue to generate evidence on streamlined Spear's impact

5

Refine the regional hub model and develop our approach for opening in new locations

6

Raise our visibility in line with our ambition to become a national charity





What we learned

Follow-on support

Observation 1:1 support for trainees during Spear Career (ongoing coaching support) appears more effective than group drop-ins

Action Shifted Spear Career to prioritise 1:1s over group sessions. Coaches can now do more bespoke motivational coaching, application writing and interview practice

Consistent quality

Observation As we've grown, delivery of the Spear Programme was varying across centres

Action Established a Quality and Development team to work directly with coaching teams across our centres, sharing best practice and investing in programme quality

Specialist training

Observation Trainees are coming to Spear with increasingly complex challenges

Action Providing specialist training for all coaches in how to best support trainees who have "adverse childhood experiences". Continuing to explore options to improve ongoing support for coaches

Supporting our coaches

Observation Gaps in coaching resource due to training, sickness and recruitment delays were affecting our ability to deliver all sessions

Action Increased coaching capacity and development of existing coaches by expanding our pool of peripatetic Development Coaches



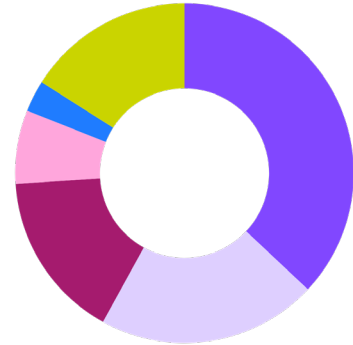
Our finances

In 2025, we made a planned budget deficit. Trustees approved the use of reserves to fund strategic projects to support the growth of Spear nationally and sustain the quality of existing programmes. This includes a seed fund to kick-start the launch of new centres.

We'll continue to invest reserves in one-off strategic projects and roles in 2026 and 2027. We've set an intentional deficit budget in 2026 and plan to do the same again in 2027.

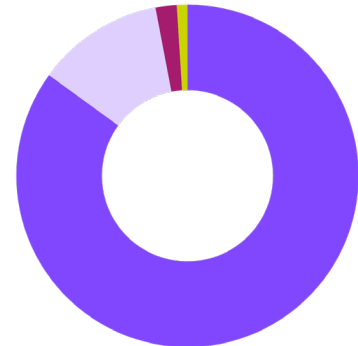
2025 income: £3.24m

- Individuals **37%**
- Trusts & foundations **21%**
- Corporate partners **16%**
- Fundraising events **7%**
- Trading income **3%**
- Other **16%**



2025 expenditure: £3.89m

- Charitable **85%**
- Fundraising **12%**
- Governance & depreciation **2%**
- Trading **1%**



Our full audited accounts will be available later in the year

What do the terms mean?

NEETs. Young people aged 16-24 who are not in education, employment or training.

Hidden NEETs. NEET young people who aren't claiming any benefits and so aren't on the radar of the government's employment support services. They can be unemployed or economically inactive (not seeking work).

Unemployed. People who are actively searching for work and are able to work but aren't working.

Economically inactive. People who haven't been searching for work in the previous four weeks and aren't ready to start work in the next two. In recent years the number of economically inactive young people has risen significantly, driven particularly by mental ill-health.



With special thanks

Our trust and foundation partners



The Calleva
Foundation



DRAPERS' CHARITABLE FUND

THE
DULVERTON
TRUST



Our corporate and employer partners



CVC

DERWENT
LONDON

8th EIGHT ROADS™

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Park



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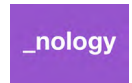
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Dorchester
Collection

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Our church partners



Alive Church
Gateshead



Bridge Community
Church Leeds



Christ Church
Clifton

CITIZEN

Citizen Church
Cardiff



City Rise
St Mark's Battersea



Holy Trinity
Brompton



Holy Trinity
Hastings



Hope Church
Islington



Lighthouse
Church London



Love Church
Bournemouth



The Mount St
Helens



Preston Minster



River Church
Ipswich



St Mark's
Kennington



St Paul's
Hammersmith



St Peter's
Bethnal Green



St Peter's
Brighton



Trinity
Cheltenham



York Vineyard
Church

Some media we featured in



FEWEEK

The Telegraph





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