

Transformation, empowerment and social change: real **impact** across Yorkshire



The cost of living crisis and greater demands on local authorities and health providers have exacerbated problems for millions in the UK.

Add these pressures to economic inequalities and employment changes and it has never been more important to help people overcome barriers, so they can move forward into employment or training and get the support they need to thrive in life and at work.



“ I am delighted to introduce you to Better Connect.

The stories and data in this report show how partnership and collaboration – **better connections** – are life changing. These inspirational outcomes would not have been possible without our team, delivery partners, funders and, most importantly, the participants of our programmes.

One of our key successes has been to evolve and adapt to ensure the critical support delivered by our partners has continued whilst navigating a changing funding landscape in the UK. Through our programmes, our delivery partners have been able to access funding opportunities which are increasingly hard to reach.

Our biggest strength is our team culture. I am proud to be part of this incredible team. I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the board of directors and all the team members for their contribution in making a difference to people's lives.”

Natasha Babar-Evans
CEO

“ **ATI made me see a future; a reason to live and carry on. I wish I had the words to explain what a massive improvement it has made to mine and my family's lives... a lifeline in the darkest of times.**”

former Action Towards Inclusion participant

“ **Better Connect is a fantastic organisation with a diverse, accessible, and person led-ethos... They provide an invaluable bridge between organisations and funders, helping to maximise the potential of vital community-based projects throughout the county.**”

Emily Havercroft
Deputy Chief Executive
Officer and Head of
Operations at
Up for Yorkshire



Turning Yorkshire into a place of empowerment in life and work...

Founded in 2007, Better Connect is a non-profit organisation based in Yorkshire which designs and leads innovative partnership projects transforming lives across the region.



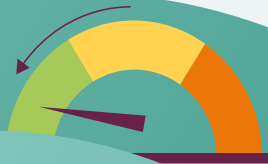
Since 2007 we have supported **8,320 participants** across key projects.

- Over **4,000** are in employment, education, training, or job search
- Over **2,700** have a disability or health condition
- **985** are from ethnic minority backgrounds
- Over **900** are current or ex-offenders
- **385** have been affected by homelessness or housing exclusion

Changing a life can have an enormous impact. The **'ripple effect'** means that when one person's life is transformed, more lives can thrive as a result.

“ I ended up attempting to take my own life multiple times, and then finally found help... The support I've received has been phenomenal... I changed my career completely... The impact it's had on my family is massive – I'm a good role model. I'm more present with them.”

Luke, Thriving at Work participant, supported by Working For Health, now founder of We Go Again



The stress on external support services (NHS, GPs, DWP*) is reduced
*National Health Service, General Practitioners, Department for Work and Pensions

Participants influence and transform the lives of those around them

Participants experience positive change in areas such as parenting, physical and mental health, and financial independence, leading to more satisfying lives

Participants make positive and sustainable changes within their lives

Participants enhance skills, confidence and wellbeing, being guided on making purposeful changes in their lives

Holistic support addressing individual needs and barriers



can be achieved through the power of partnerships...

Since 2007 we have designed and led dozens of programmes, created partnerships with **200 organisations** across Yorkshire and secured more than **£30m in funding and social investment**. Our partners operate in a challenging environment, and we give them specialist support to become more impactful, resilient and sustainable.

We specialise in working with the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. Participants and delivery partners often tell us our projects are different from other available support. Our programmes make people feel valued, listened to and empowered.

“ **Their work with both individuals and partner organisations is exceptional; their vision is far-reaching and all encompassing.**”

C.J. Allison, Project Manager, Coteterminous CIC

We create and manage better partnership-projects by bringing together organisations with common values. We deliver highly successful projects and increase the impact of funding.

Better Connect

Our experienced experts manage programmes from finance (bidding, monitoring profiles and targets) to communication (showing impact and building strong relationships).

We connect funders and community-based delivery partners

through strong links with community organisations across Yorkshire delivering frontline services which support a range of social and economic outcomes. We streamline contracting and project management.

Funders

We finance projects through a range of funders who trust Better Connect to lead strong partnership programmes.

Our partnership model

Delivery partners

Our delivery partners are passionate VCSE organisations, experts in offering high quality support.

We are responsible for our funding, demonstrate our impact and we are experts in contract and grant management.

We monitor, evaluate and report progress to funders in engaging ways.

Participants

Individuals who have recognised they want to make a change in their lives and need support.










We believe in better partnership management











and we do not compete with partners for frontline delivery. We support our partners by providing comprehensive project and partnership management, empowering them to focus on delivery.

and well-managed programmes that transform people's lives.

“ The transformation has been nothing short of mind blowing, the way I interact with people, the way I can live my life differently.”

Glen, Peer Support Worker and former Action Towards Inclusion programme participant

Programme	Model	Delivery	Partners	Participants	Funders
<p>Reducing Inequalities, Supporting Employment (RISE): A support programme for economically inactive adults facing barriers to engaging with employment and/or training.</p>	<p>i 1-2-1 key worker support</p> <p>Access to tailored interventions</p>	<p>2023 to 2024</p> 	<p>21 across York and North Yorkshire</p>	<p>359+ participants: (project target)</p>	<p>Funded by UK Government</p> <p> NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL</p> <p> CITY OF YORK COUNCIL</p> <p>Total investment: £1.13m</p>
<p>Multiply: Supports the development of numeracy skills and highlights the benefits of developing numeracy skills at work.</p>	<p>i 1-2-1 key worker support with budgeting and debt management</p> <p>Theory of Change events encouraging employers to rethink recruitment when it comes to maths</p> <p>Engaging groups in maths-focused wellbeing</p>	<p>2023 to 2024</p> 	<p>18 across York and North Yorkshire</p>	<p>1,726+ participants (project target)</p>	<p> Department for Education</p> <p> NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL</p> <p> CITY OF YORK COUNCIL</p> <p>Total investment: £860K</p>
<p>Thriving at Work: Supports people to thrive in their lives and work with a particular focus on supporting employers and employees in inclusive workplaces.</p>	<p>i 1-2-1 coaching and mentoring for employees</p> <p>Direct support for SMEs (small- and medium-sized businesses) to create inclusive and diverse workplaces</p> <p>Webinar series and specialist diversity and skills-based training for staff</p>	<p>2021 to 2023</p> 	<p>10 across York, North Yorkshire and East Riding</p>	<p>801 participants: 250 engaged in workplace support; 576 engaged with diversity training 40 SMEs engaged</p>	<p> European Union European Social Fund Investing in jobs and skills</p> <p>Total investment: £1.73m</p>

Programme	Model	Delivery	Partners	Participants	Funders
<p>Community Grants: Grants of up to £20,000 to VCSE organisations to support unemployed or economically inactive individuals.</p>	<p> 1-2-1 key worker support and group work</p>	<p>2018 to 2022 </p>	<p>27 across North Yorkshire</p>	<p>1,200 participants: 86 now employed; 80 in further education</p>	<p> European Union European Social Fund Investing in jobs and skills</p> <p>Total investment: £1.1m</p>
<p>Action Towards Inclusion: Employability programme supporting unemployed and economically inactive adults to traverse their barriers to employment, education, training and job-search.</p>	<p> 1-2-1 key worker support</p> <p>Access to tailored interventions</p>	<p>2017 to 2023 </p>	<p>53 across North Yorkshire, York and East Riding</p>	<p>3,733 participants: 1,009 now in employment; 910 now in education or training</p>	<p> European Union European Social Fund Investing in jobs and skills</p> <p></p> <p>Total investment: £13.2m</p>
<p>Talent Match: Partnership programme across West Yorkshire that offered tailored holistic support to unemployed young people aged 18–24.</p>	<p> 1-2-1 key worker support</p> <p>Access to tailored interventions</p>	<p>2013 to 2019 </p>	<p>21 across West Yorkshire</p>	<p>2,600 participants: 841 now employed; 472 in further education</p>	<p></p> <p>Total investment: £6.9m</p>



Better Connect have managed many other programmes, such as the Innovation Fund for North Yorkshire County Council, The National Citizens Service (NCS) programme, the ESF and Skills Funding Agency Adult Skills Budget, and the TEWV Innovation Fund for Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust.

“ Better Connect and our delivery partners commit to meeting or exceeding all applicable environmental regulations, laws and codes of practices. In order to do this, we have sustainability action plans which are regularly reviewed and expanded.”

*Christine Brass,
Sustainability Champion
and Multiply Programme
Manager at Better Connect*



Can you help us accelerate our impact over the next five years?



- **Invest in us** so we can continue to lead more transformational partnerships and transform thousands more lives across Yorkshire.
- **Partner with us** to widen your impact, gain access to broader funding opportunities, and become part of a supportive network of dedicated delivery organisations.
- **Join us** on our board to have a say in what we do and how we do it, or become part of our passionate staff team.
- **Connect with us** on social media to see the social and economic impact our programmes are making, find out about opportunities, and learn more about the work we do.

Connect with us



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