

2020/2021

ANNUAL REPORT

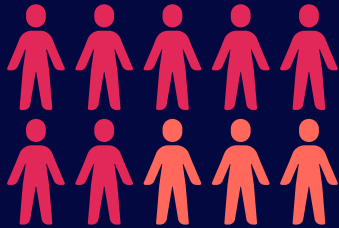
BOOST



BOOST

2020/2021 REPORT

26 416 Total interventions



16 752 total employment interventions

9 664 total housing and benefit interventions

What can I say apart from I am so proud of what the team has achieved over the last year. These numbers speak volumes, but behind them is the effort everyone has put in to keep things running and adapting to new ways of working. Their commitment and resilience has amazed me and continues to do so.

To accept and deal with change has been difficult for both clients and staff but working together we have supported each other to stay positive and overcome barriers. I know that we are a stronger team as a result and are ready to continue providing the support which is needed more than ever now.

BOOST looks very different now from one year ago. The team has grown both in numbers and in the range of services offered. This time last year we had no JETS project, KICKSTART and Apprentice programme, web referral process or online training. I believe that we still have a long road ahead of us when it comes to helping people affected by COVID, but we are ready for that challenge and will carry on looking at ways to support Barnet residents whether they are virtual or face to face or a blend of both.'

- Lawrence Graham, BOOST Manager



362
Webinars



51
Households supported with
COVID-19
Winter Grant
Scheme



72
Young
People
signed up

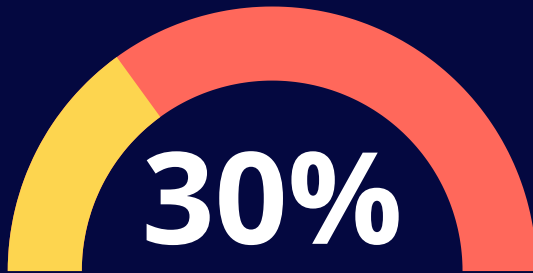


32
Rough
Sleepers
signed up

BOOST

Employment Support

BOOST support not only job-ready Barnet residents but all those who are unemployed or want a change in career. This includes rough sleepers, graduates, people with disabilities, those furthest from the job market and those who lack confidence or motivation. Everyone we work with is different so we use a tailored, person - centred approach that helps clients to overcome their own barriers and get ready for employment



148 out of 487 people
into work in 2020

27% of clients who went into work
were Barnet Homes tenants.

13 581

Total interventions including:

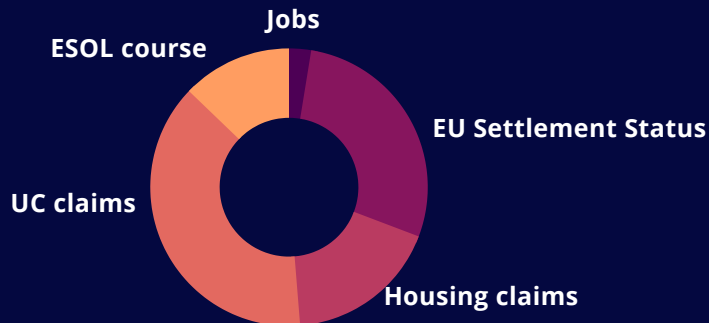
10 464

Employment
interventions

3 117

Wellbeing and translation
support

32 Rough Sleepers:



Valerijus

Case study:

'I met Valerijus in The Stay Club three months ago. He has been homeless for over 10 years and was one of over 250 people housed into temporary accommodation by Barnet Homes during COVID-19. When I first met Valerijus he had no documents to identify himself so my first priority was to get him a passport. This allowed me to assist him with applying for EU Settlement and he now has Indefinite Leave in the UK – Settled Status. After that I was able to help him open a bank account and to claim Universal Credit. As Valerijus is not able to work due to a health condition, he will continue visiting his GP and I will assist him to apply for PIP in the future.'

Employment Support Officer (Rough Sleepers)

BOOST

Housing and Benefit Support

The Housing Support team played a vital part during what has been a challenging year for Barnet residents. The pandemic saw many residents fall out of work and have their health impacted by the barriers of lockdown. We started to see a shift in the type of clients approaching BOOST. Our clients now included business owners, home-owners and those on furlough. Our call centre and mailbox demand had nearly tripled by the end of the year

12 835

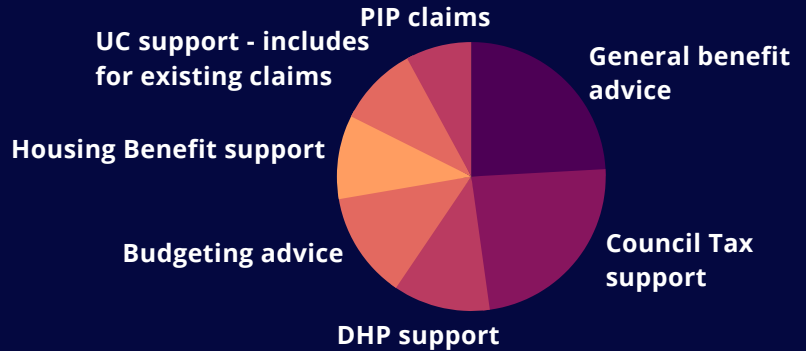
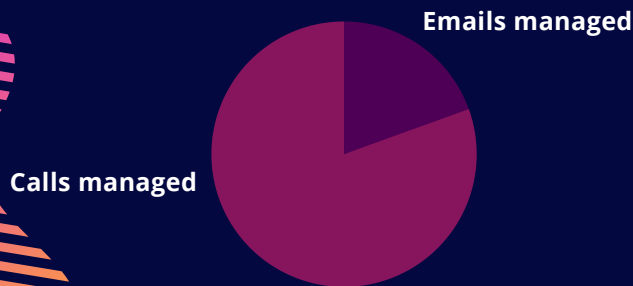
Number of intervention including:

8 195

calls & emails

1 469

welfare benefit advisor appointments



1,037 Discretionary Housing Payments awarded with a value of £2.53m

Many clients sought financial advice and support, significantly including many who were claiming benefits for the first time and others who had been affected by the Benefit Cap as a result of the increase in Universal Credit.

We saw an increase in demand for Discretionary Housing Payments and Council Tax Support. The Housing Support team strengthened their partnership working with colleagues in the Discretionary Housing Payment, Council Tax & Housing Benefits teams as well as Barnet Homes Housing Options and other partners.

Many residents have found it a challenge to access benefits, due to barriers around IT literacy, language needs and a lack of understanding of the welfare benefit system. However, the team have worked to overcome these barriers by intervening at an early stage, working in partnership developing webinars and advice sessions and taking time to reassure residents that they're not on their own.

Testimonial:

'I wish to say a huge Thank You to your Housing Support Manager whose support and professionalism eased a distressing situation. I feel it is important to acknowledge those who go the extra mile to make a positive impact on the lives of others'

Case study:

One of our clients is a pensioner who was unable to afford the shortfall in his rent and was referred by a DHP officer. DHP was paid whilst we supported the client to apply for Attendance Allowance. However the application was refused and the client didn't want to go through the hassle of challenging the decision. We persuaded the client to do so by referring them to a Welfare Benefit Adviser. The DHP award was extended while this claim was ongoing and a week after the Adviser submitted the mandatory reconsideration it was successful.

BOOST

Young People
16-24 year
olds

Employment opportunities for 16 - 24 year olds have been badly affected by the pandemic. We have started to see an adverse impact on their ambitions for education and careers and their motivation and mental health. Providing support through these difficult times has been challenging but BOOST has been consistent in offering support throughout the lockdown. We have delivered bespoke one to ones to help individuals overcome barriers, online workshops and webinars, as well as brokering new support offers with partners and working with employers to source opportunities. We will get through this together.

83

Signed up young people with BOOST

33

Employment



33

Education



63

Attended BOOST
workshops



6

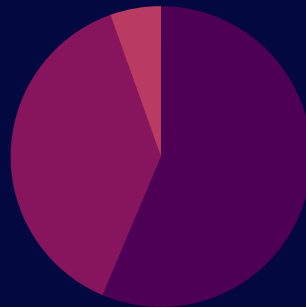
Traineeships and
Volunteering



Volunteering

Work or apprenticeship

Training or education



Testimonial:

'I really appreciate BOOST help and I wouldn't be in my current position without them so I am very grateful and thankful. I recommend anyone who was in a similar situation to me to give BOOST a go, because they can do great things and help people.'

Chris

Case study:

I recently began working with R. who wanted to find work to start earning some regular money, but lacked experience and direction. R. was always late to appointments and sometimes smelt of marijuana, which was frustrating, but other than this was very easy to work with and was engaging and willing. I came to realise that there were other issues that could prevent R from getting and keeping a job. R. came from a culture of benefits where none of their family had ever worked. R required a lot of mentoring and emotional support to help get past previous traumas. R was also very insecure and shy – another thing we had to address and build in time for any potential interviews. Together we created a CV, covering letter and I arranged a job screening. The job screening went well and R left a good impression with the recruiters. R was then invited for an induction in a retail store following the screening. R went on to pass the induction day and was offered the job as a retail assistant. This was a huge accomplishment for R. who had never worked before and was the first in the family to do so.

BOOST make it click

Make it Click Programme

"Make It Click" is part of Learn My Way, developed by Good Things Foundation and made possible through funding from Google.org. This project is a collection of online learning resources to help people build their digital skills. It includes courses, tools and templates carefully picked from established websites with a track record of providing reliable digital skills content.

94

Clients enrolled



BOOST were successful in gaining funding to deliver Make it Click in Barnet. In a difficult year for training delivery we are pleased to have hit our target of 94 clients enrolled and supported in at least two sessions.

Testimonial:

'Very interactive, excellent host, friendly and informative'

Make it Click helps adults to achieve positive outcomes around employment by supporting them to grow digital skills and giving them practical confidence. The pandemic has meant we couldn't use our face to face training room so have had to adapt our offer through providing a regular series of webinars and giving one-to-one telephone and video appointments. All clients are registered with Learn My Way and we guide them through the 200+ resources on the site and importantly use it to track their progress.

We have been hosting fortnightly webinars on different topics.

So far, we have delivered 14 webinars with 445 sign-ups and 258 attendees.



73%

445 people signed for webinars
258 people attended the webinars



70%

70% of people said the webinars improved their skills



9.4 out of 10
people would
recommend to
their friends

BOOST

JETS

Job Entry Targeted Support (JETS) is a government initiative to help people made unemployed during COVID. In 2020 Boost sub-contracted with Shaw Trust to deliver employability support interventions to eligible Barnet residents as part of the JETS programme.



760

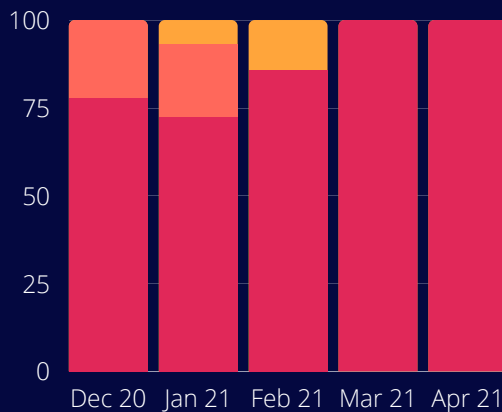
Working as a team we've been able to draw on a diverse range of skills and experience to create a suite of more than 30 presentations covering Employability, Wellbeing and Digital skills. Our passionate and dedicated Employment Coaches have delivered over 760



770

workshops and webinars on employability, digital upskilling and personal wellbeing attended by over 770 participants.

Shaw Trust have conducted a customer satisfaction survey and we are delighted to say we have achieved 94.3% rated Excellent or Good by our Participants and we have not received any negative comments.



Excellent

Good

Average

Testimonials:

'My consultant was so upbeat, positive, compassionate, understanding, supportive, resourceful and I came away with some doable action steps which until now I have felt a bit stuck'.

JETS Client

30 Job outcomes



In a Shaw Trust customer satisfaction survey **94.3%** of clients rated BOOST as Excellent or Good

BOOST

Apprenticeships

'In September 2020 seven Apprentices started their 14 month learning journey with Barnet Homes. In a joint initiative between The Barnet Group and LBL Skills roles were created in Finance, Complaints and Compliance, Income and Revenue, Contact Centre, Gas Team and BOOST.

'Their keen desire to soak up the knowledge and experience presented to them has been commendable. In fact the students have already completed a Level 2 qualification in the Principles of Customer Service and, even more significantly, the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Level 2 Certificate in Housing Practice. Well done to everyone and all the best over the coming 6 months'

Oliver Henry, LBL Skills



Testimonial:

'The apprenticeship has been extremely rewarding considering the circumstances. This is mainly because of the amazing support I have received from my managers and colleagues which has allowed me to be hands on with the work I am doing, even if it has been from home. I am also learning a lot about housing through the training we are receiving once a week.'

Stella Cooper

Mentoring:

'Learning a new job and studying has been difficult during the pandemic and has emphasised the need for strong support from managers and for in-work mentoring. This year was extremely difficult year for the cohort of Apprentices, mainly because a lot of them have had to do remote working. Normally I would say that some people can be more productive working from home, but when studying a level 2 in CIH (Chartered Institute of Housing) and not being able for most of the year be together as a group when it came to their study day was tough on some of them if not all of them.'

I must say that they have been exceptional and have exceeded what I thought was possible, they have all submitted up to now all four assignments required to pass the CIH part of the apprenticeship and are now working towards their portfolio and case study. They have been supportive of one another and continue to grow and develop as individuals, I believe after have many meetings with them their tutors and their managers, they would have a great chance at the end of this apprenticeship to be successful in the job market and hopefully can continue and stay on within The Barnet Group.'

Lawrence Graham – BOOST Manager

70 hours
spent on
Mentoring
Apprentices



BOOST

Website and Social Media



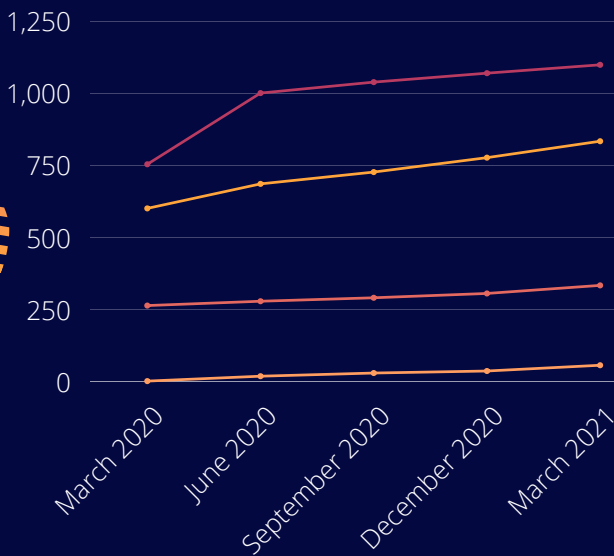
Like many other businesses when the first lockdown began in 2020 we had to suspend our face to face meetings and find an alternative way to engage with clients. We developed and launched our website - boostbarnet.org.

In 2019 our services saw footfall of 12,000 visits so moving offers online and maintaining the BOOST person-centred approach was no easy thing but digital tools soon became one of our primary contact points with clients and created new ways to serve them better.

The BOOST website now allows people to register themselves with us or refer a client, there are lots of resources helping with employment and benefits as well as details of upcoming events and training offers. From the website our clients can get our weekly job bulletins and find job vacancies around Barnet.

We knew from the start that social media would help us reach those people who could no longer drop in to one of our venues as well as help us spread the word to the many new clients impacted by COVID.

Social Media followers growth in 2020/2021



Instagram (755-1100)

Instagram is the fastest growing platform in terms of followers. We publish daily CV tips on Instastories and save them on highlights.

Twitter (602 - 835)

This is our main platform to keep in touch with our partners, repost their news and keep updating them about our events. Recently we noticed a growth of individual followers (and not only organizations).

Facebook (265 - 335)

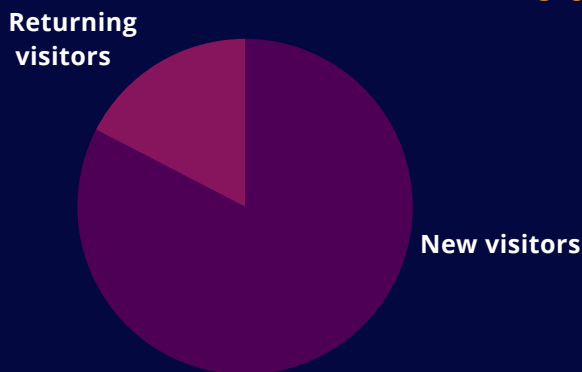
We created one generic Facebook page for BOOST Barnet, we joined and have been actively engaged in 15 Facebook groups around Barnet Borough including Barnet Families, Barnet Mums and London Borough Of Barnet Businesses.

LinkedIn (3 - 58)

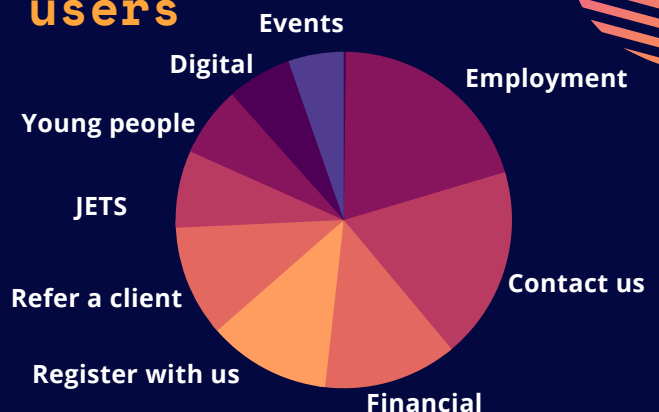
We started to be active on LinkedIn by posting weekly Happy Friday-Happy News from our team, which slowly became a very popular post among our followers.

5 578

Website users



Audience overview



Top pages