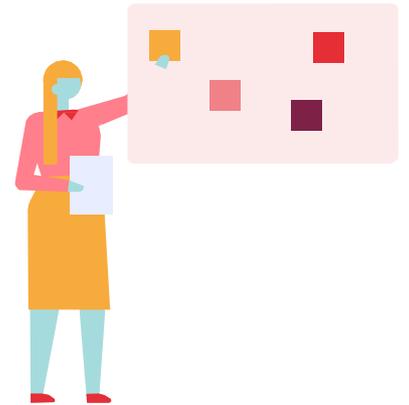


# CatZero Programme Concept Test

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Youth Futures Foundation is an independent, not-for-profit organisation established with a £90m endowment from the Reclaim Fund to improve employment outcomes for young people from marginalised backgrounds. Our aim is to narrow employment gaps by identifying what works and why, investing in evidence generation and innovation, and igniting a movement for change.

CatZero was founded in 2008, to help young people in the Humber region who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET). CatZero were awarded funding from YFF under the Development Grants Funding Stream to deliver their personal development programme, to 50 young people aged 14 – 24 over a one-year period. IFF Research is an independent social research agency. Between 2021-22 they carried out the evaluation activities and analysis of the CatZero programme funded by YFF as described in this report.

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# Executive Summary

CatZero were awarded a grant from Youth Futures Foundation under the Development Grants Funding Stream to deliver their personal development programme to 50 young people aged 14 – 24 over a one-year period, from January to December 2021. The Covid pandemic impacted nearly every aspect of the delivery of the programme and required CatZero to make changes to the programme throughout the delivery period.

A total of 53 young people finished the programme (i.e., they attended until the programme ended in December 2021; they completed the required minimum number of activities; or they progressed to education, employment, or training (EET)) from either Grimsby or Hull.

Thirty-nine of the participants who finished the programme were over the age of 18, and 14 were aged between 14 and 18. There was a range of needs across the participants, roughly half had been diagnosed with a mental health condition (data collected by CatZero) and many of the participants reported that they suffered with severe social anxiety.

The core programme comprised of four main categories of activities, which participants engaged with throughout the year: Group activities (usually recreational, soft skill building), Qualifications, Progression support (EET focussed support, e.g., interview practice), and Action Planning one-to-one meetings. Participants were also given the opportunity to take part in an 8-day residential sailing trip if CatZero staff deemed them ready and capable.

The CatZero programme has strong theoretical foundations and is based on three key components:

1. **Restorative Practice.** This is an umbrella term for a philosophy that views relationships as an integral component to fostering positive and healthy environments. Instead of focussing on consequences or punishments for behaviour that is non-compliant, Restorative Practices try to focus on empowering people to restore relationships, resolve conflicts and build community in proactive and positive ways. This philosophy underpins how CatZero staff work with young people in groups.
2. **Outcomes-Based Accountability** is a system of change management that emphasises an approach that seeks to identify the underlying problems of a given situation, and to take a diagnostic approach to solving it. It is used by CatZero in the way they set achievable goals with young people focussed on the aspects of their lives that they want to be different.
3. **Adventure challenge.** There is a lot of evidence for the positive benefits of physically demanding residential challenges for young people. The CatZero programme incorporates an optional 8-day residential sailing trip. As well as academic literature on the benefits of adventure challenges in general, there is evidence that sail training in

particular can have a positive long-term impact upon levels of self-esteem among the young people who take part.

Two Theories of Change were developed for the programme, one for the over 18 age group and one for the under 18 age group. These were very similar in that the inputs (i.e. CatZero staff time and an overall approach routed in Restorative Practice) and the core programme activities were the same. Where they differed was in the progression related activities, the outputs, and the outcomes. For the over 18s these were more focussed on securing employment or re-entering education and training, whereas for the under 18s the focus was much more on education.

Overall, half (53%) of participants completed the programme in the sense of completing the expected number of sessions (10 group activities and 6 action planning sessions) or having achieved an EET outcome.

The table below summarises the key findings relating to the research questions that guided this evaluation activity.

**Figure 1: Summary of key findings**

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	FINDINGS
How does the “CatZero Youth Development” support model work to support young people who are NEET to achieve education, employment, and training (EET) outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people are supported through taking part in a range of activities which enable them to overcome barriers and build on the softer skills necessary for EET outcomes. (<i>Programme Content section: p25-32</i>)</li> <li>• At the heart of the programme is an action-planning process that encourages them to set their 3 key goals (which do not have to be EET related), to take small steps towards them and revisit this progress at regular one-to-one sessions. (<i>p28</i>)</li> <li>• Restorative Practice underpins the support that CatZero provide to programme participants. (<i>p15, 46, 78</i>)</li> </ul>
What are different levels of support provided in terms of participant needs, support journeys and outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The programme is highly individualised with most activities being voluntary so each journey is adapted to individuals needs. (<i>Programme Content section: p25-32, 42</i>)</li> <li>• The programme looks quite different for under 18s compared to over 18s because of the restrictions of school/college timetables</li> </ul>

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	FINDINGS
	<p>and the different outcomes that are possible within a 12 month period. (<i>Programme Content section: p25-32, 40</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some younger participants came from families who were also part of another CatZero programme – Full Families – and hence were receiving additional support. (<i>p34-35</i>)</li> <li>• Some participants took part in the adventure challenge at the end of the programme involving a residential trip on CatZero’s yacht, but not all did. (<i>p38, 75</i>) There is evidence that participants who did take part achieved additional benefits in terms of outcomes such as confidence and resilience. (<i>p60-64</i>)</li> </ul>
<p>For each support journey, what do young people themselves feel is effective/less effective and why?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people often struggled to articulate which specific parts of the programme had helped or even what they were initially hoping to achieve by taking part (and we were only able to speak to a very small number of participants from the under 18 programme). (<i>Participant Experiences section: p40-47</i>)</li> <li>• They were generally clear however that they had felt more supported than through most of the rest of their lives and they attributed this mostly to the nature of the staff at CatZero (which is likely due to the Outcomes Based Accountability approach and their use of Restorative Practice). Young people commented that they felt really ‘listened to’. (<i>Participant Experiences section: p40-47</i>)</li> <li>• Those who took part in the sailing challenge were particularly positive about the impact that this had. (<i>p60-64</i>)</li> </ul>
<p>What intervening and final outcomes do participants achieve? What are the critical drivers of these outcomes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a range of different interim outcomes achieved which relate closely to the goals agreed (e.g. eating more healthily, cutting down on smoking). Achievement seems to be related to the process of setting small steps and regularly meeting to discuss progress. (<i>Evidence of Promise section: p54-65</i>)</li> </ul>

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	FINDINGS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proportion of over 18s achieving EET outcomes very soon after completion is encouraging. (p64)</li> </ul>
<p>How does CatZero work with employers/ broader stakeholders/statutory partners? What is effective/less effective in their approach and why?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CatZero has good links with employers and would usually have been able to provide more work experience / work trials / practice interviews but this was affected by Covid. (p39)</li> <li>The Under 18 programme would ideally have had more engagement from schools. Working with this age group on this programme was less familiar for CatZero and schools were hard to engage through the Covid pandemic. (p38-40)</li> </ul>
<p>How does CatZero work to improve programme design, delivery, and performance?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processes are always under review and this has led to the introduction of new data management software. (p68)</li> <li>Through constant dialogue and tailored support, there are informal feedback loops in place with stakeholders and participants. (Participant Experiences section: p41-47)</li> </ul>
<p>What (if anything) could CatZero implement to further support effective delivery?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The data collection for the YFF-funded programme was extensive but paper-based and therefore difficult to analyse. CatZero are implementing new data management software. (p68)</li> <li>There would be value in understanding long-term outcomes for participants. In order to do this CatZero would need to secure consent for re-contact and then resource this process.</li> <li>Ideally for the under 18s there would be more structured mechanisms in place to record attendance and engagement at school. For example, if CatZero were automatically notified of any unexpected absences they could enter that data into the MI for intervention and analysis purposes.</li> </ul>

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	FINDINGS
<p>What (if anything) could improve delivery to young people and (better) support achievement of outcomes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sailing challenge appears to have positive impacts for those that participate but not all are able to participate (e.g if they have serious sea-sickness or are unable to give up smoking for the length of the trip). (p29) It might be worth considering a ‘replacement’ adventure challenge for those who do not take part in the sailing. (p61-62)</li> <li>• The Covid pandemic impacted nearly every aspect of the delivery of the programme as government laws and guidelines severely limited opportunities for face-to-face engagement. CatZero were forced to make adaptations to the delivery of the programme to account for this. In the future, the absence of Covid restrictions should mean that CatZero are able to deliver the programme as originally intended which in turn should mean that young people reap the full benefits. (p39-40)</li> </ul>
<p>What could other practitioners learn from this support model to support NEET young people?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of a range of different activities to sustain contact between practitioners and young people and also between young people and their peers has been effective in ensuring good retention over a long programme.</li> <li>• However, trying to incorporate 14-18s into a programme that was really designed with over 18s in mind has been challenging due to differences in expected outcomes and having to work around educational commitments for the younger age group. (p40, 70-71)</li> </ul>
<p>What broader policy and practice lessons about what works to support NEET young people can be drawn from the evaluation and research findings?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of Restorative Practice appears relatively unusual in this type of programme and has a strong evidence base. (p15, 46, 78)</li> <li>• Similarly the Outcomes Based Accountability approach – in the form of setting achievable goals about things that individuals want to be different about their lives appears effective. (p16, 86-88)</li> </ul>

# Introduction

## Background

CatZero was founded in 2008, to help young people in the Humber region who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET). Their programmes focus on a holistic (in the sense that they take account for and address a broad variety of personal factors when supporting participants) service that is committed to working with young people and their families to identify and address the underlying causes of the problems they are facing in life, as an early intervention to unemployment. Since their founding, CatZero's organisational scope has broadened, and they now deliver projects amongst a broader spectrum of audiences beyond young people, including programmes specifically for families and certain groups of adults (for example, armed forces veterans and lone parents). CatZero describe the support they provide as "personal development" programmes which typically take place over a 12-week period and involve helping participants to build a holistic understanding of the issues they are facing in life and empower them to take action to overcome their difficulties and achieve their goals. The programmes are personalised as each participant will identify their own goals and will develop, with the support of CatZero staff, their own plan to meet these goals, rather than carrying out pre-planned activities towards a set of goals defined by the programme. Consistent across all CatZero's programmes is their use of Restorative Practice by all staff when working with participants, which is an approach that aims to foster positive and healthy relationships, communities, and social environments.

## Programme

CatZero were awarded funding from YFF under the Development Grants Funding Stream to deliver their personal development programme, to 50 young people aged 14 – 24 over a one-year period, from January to December 2021.

The core programme comprised of four main categories of activities, which participants engaged with throughout the year: Group activities (usually recreational, soft skill building), Qualifications, Progression support, and Action Planning one-to-one meetings. Participants were also given the opportunity to take part in an 8-day residential sailing trip if CatZero staff deemed them ready and capable. Within each element of the programme, CatZero staff take a Restorative Practice approach in that they aim provide a highly supportive environment, to work with the participants (rather than doing things to or for participants), and to encourage healthy relationships.

## Aims and research questions

The evaluation aims for this Programme Concept Test were to:

1. Understand the Theory of Change (ToC) for CatZero's YFF-funded programme
2. Support CatZero to understand their theory of change and how to consistently evidence the pathways/outcomes with data
3. Capture a rich understanding of participant experiences and views of the support model
4. Support CatZero to know which elements of delivery work most effectively and to refine practice to support further achievement of education, employment and training (EET) outcomes
5. Provide recommendations for programme refinements and a plan for further evaluation

And the specific research questions were:

- How does CatZero's support model work to support young people who are NEET to achieve education, employment, and training (EET) outcomes?
- What are the key differences between the different levels of support in terms of participant needs, support journeys and outcomes?
- For each support journey, what do young people themselves feel is effective/less effective and why?
- What intervening and final outcomes do participants achieve? What are the critical drivers of these outcomes?
- How does CatZero work with employers/ broader stakeholders/statutory partners? What is effective/less effective in their approach and why?
- How does CatZero work to improve programme design, delivery, and performance?
- What (if anything) could improve delivery to young people and (better) support achievement of outcomes?
- What could other practitioners learn from this support model to support NEET young people?
- What broader policy and practice lessons about what works to support NEET young people can be drawn from the evaluation and research findings?

# Methods

The evaluation was conducted in two stages:

1. The scoping phase which took place from June to August 2021. The purpose of this part of the evaluation was to understand the overall design of the programme and the intended participant journey, to profile the participants who were taking part in the programme, and to develop the programme's Theories of Change.
2. The process study took place from December 2021 to March 2022. The purpose was to assess the extent to which the programme was delivered as intended and identify any refinements which could be made to improve delivery, and to test and explore the Theories of Change including an analysis of early outcomes.

In addition to these two stages, we conducted a literature review to gain an understanding of the theoretical base that underpins key elements of the CatZero programme. This was conducted at the outset of evaluation during the scoping phase and was returned to during the process study as our understanding of the programme developed through further engagement with staff and participants.

## Scoping phase

### Primary research

The primary research during the scoping phase consisted of interviews capturing the views of nine staff from CatZero (at the time of the research CatZero directly employed c. 20 staff members), two mini-focus groups with a total of six programme participants, and a two-day site visit. These interviews helped us to better understand the development of the programme and the means of delivery. For the site visit, we observed young people taking part in programme activities and interacting with staff. We also viewed CatZero's facilities, including their 22-metre yacht, which is moored in Hull Docks. The mini-groups with current programme participants were used to explore young people's views on their motivations for joining the scheme and a summary of their experience with CatZero to date.

### Development of a Journey Map, Needs Profile and Theories of Change

We developed a participant Journey Map (p27) to visually represent the different stages, activities, and experiences that a young person can be involved with when they take part in programme,

drawing upon our learnings from our document review and primary research. We also developed a participant Needs Profile to illustrate the characteristics of the YFF-funded programme participants and the areas in which they needed support at the point of entering the service. This was primarily based on anonymised participant data from CatZero, supported by our learnings from the mini-focus groups and secondary data sources. Finally, in collaboration with CatZero and YFF we developed two programme Theories of Change, one for the over-18 age group and the other for the under-18 age group to capture our shared understanding of the mechanisms by which the programme is designed to create lasting change in young people's lives (p18-19)). All outputs were shared with CatZero and YFF for feedback and iterative development culminating in versions documented within this report.

## Process study

### Primary research

The primary research for the process study stage of the evaluation consisted of:

- Depth interviews with 12 programme participants to discuss their experiences and how they feel they may have benefitted from taking part in the programme. CatZero staff helped to facilitate the interviews by inviting all programme participants to take part, liaising with programme participants to arrange the interview time, and where necessary providing a laptop and private space to participants to be interviewed.
- A further two programme participants, who were unavailable for an interview, sent responses to our interview questions to us by email);
- Depth interviews with 10 members of staff to reflect on programme delivery and early outcomes; and
- A paired depth interview with representatives from CatZero partner organisations, specifically a major employer in the area who facilitated placements for the participants and a school at which some of the under 18 age group attend, to explore their working relationships and reflect upon outcomes for the programme participants that they interacted with.

### MI data analysis

CatZero staff collected and updated Monitoring Information (MI) data on the programme participants upon recruitment to the programme, during the programme, and upon completion of the programme. The data collected were wide-ranging and include basic contact and demographic

information, attendance at action planning sessions and at group activities, qualifications gained, benchmarking and tracking of various personal development metrics, and EET destination upon completion. These data were recorded primarily on paper (on attendance sheets and standardised forms) as well as updating PowerPoint slides which showed participant’s personal development ‘wheel’ (see [Action Planning - tailored and holistic support](#)). On the conclusion of the programme all these data were collated and entered into a single Excel spreadsheet. An anonymised version of this Excel spreadsheet was shared with IFF Research.

IFF Research used the data provided to produce the programme participation and participant outcomes analysis set out in this report.

### Timeline

	2021							2022			
	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
<b>Scoping phase</b>											
Project kick off											
Literature review											
Development of research materials											
Primary research											
Development of Journey Map, Participant Needs Profile and ToCs											
<b>Process study</b>											
Development of research materials											
Primary research											
Analysis of primary data											
MI Data Collated											
Analysis of MI Data											
Literature review											

# Findings

## Evidence base for programme theory

This section briefly sets out the evidence base for the programme theory. A more detailed literature review is included in Appendix B.

### Restorative Practice

The CatZero programme is underpinned by an intervention approach known as ‘Restorative Practice’ which is an umbrella term for a philosophy that views relationships as an integral component to fostering positive and healthy environments. Instead of focussing on consequences or punishments for behaviour that is non-compliant, Restorative Practices focus on empowering people to restore relationships, resolve conflicts and build community in proactive and positive ways.<sup>1</sup> The literature around working restoratively describes the creation of a high-challenge and high-support environment which is ‘characterised by doing things with people, rather than to them or for them’.<sup>2</sup> The idea is that alongside interventions to address harm when it has already happened, efforts are also invested in practices that help to prevent harm and conflict occurring in the first place by creating a sense of belonging, safety, and social responsibility within a community. There is a strong focus on relationships with other community members and doing what is right by others rather than a heavy emphasis on rules.

Academic research into Restorative Practice (which is covered in detail in Appendix B) provides evidence for broad positive impacts, particularly on more marginalised / disadvantaged groups of young people. For example, one evaluation in the USA found the use of Restorative Practice reduced the disparities in suspension rates between White and African American high school students.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Can Restorative Practices Improve School Climate and Curb Suspensions? An Evaluation of the Impact of Restorative Practices in a Mid-Sized Urban School District. Catherine H. Augustine, John Engberg, Geoffrey E. Grimm, Emma Lee, Elaine Lin Wang, Karen Christianson, Andrea A. Joseph.

<sup>2</sup> Wachtel T (2013) ‘Defining Restorative’. International Institute for Restorative Practices. Cumbria. Available online: [www.kipp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Principles\\_and\\_Practices\\_of\\_Restorative\\_Justice\\_in\\_Schools\\_Defining\\_Restorative.pdf](http://www.kipp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Principles_and_Practices_of_Restorative_Justice_in_Schools_Defining_Restorative.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Can Restorative Practices Improve School Climate and Curb Suspensions? An Evaluation of the Impact of Restorative Practices in a Mid-Sized Urban School District. Catherine H. Augustine, John Engberg, Geoffrey E. Grimm, Emma Lee, Elaine Lin Wang, Karen Christianson, Andrea A. Joseph.

## Outcomes Based Accountability

Another theoretical approach which underpins CatZero's intervention approach is Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA). OBA is a system of change management that emphasizes an approach which seeks to identify the underlying problems of a given situation, and to take a diagnostic approach to solving it.<sup>4</sup> It has been employed across a range of social services in the UK and is seen to be complimentary to the use of Restorative Practice. An evaluation of the use of Outcomes Based Accountability, alongside Restorative Practice, in providing children and social care services in Leeds has shown positive short affects.<sup>5</sup>

## Sailing trip

Perhaps the most unique element of the CatZero programme is the opportunity for participants to take part in an 8-day residential sailing trip as an active crew member at the end of their time with CatZero. The aim of this trip is to broaden young people's perspectives on what they are capable of and to help them to learn valuable team-working skills.

There is a lot of academic literature that show the positive impacts of such adventure challenges on individuals from a wide range of different backgrounds, including on their attitudes to new challenges, their self-esteem and on their EET prospects.<sup>6,7</sup> There is also specific literature around the use of sail training in particular and the positive long-term impact this can have upon levels of self-esteem among the young people who take part.<sup>9,10</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Trying Hard is Not Good Enough: How to Produce Measurable Improvements for Customers and Communities*, Mark Friedman (Parse Publishing), 2015

<sup>5</sup> "Leeds Family Valued" Mason et. al.: Department of Education, 2017 - [https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/29566/1/Leeds\\_Family\\_Valued\\_-\\_Evaluation\\_report.pdf](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/29566/1/Leeds_Family_Valued_-_Evaluation_report.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Mental health benefits of outdoor adventures: Results from two pilot studies. Michael Mutz & Johannes Muller. *Journal of Adolescence*. Volume 49, June 2016, Pages 105-11

<sup>7</sup> An outcome evaluation of the implementation of the Outward Bound Singapore five-day "intercept" program. Rebecca P. Ang, Nurul Fariyah, Steven Lau. *Journal of Adolescence* Volume 37, Issue 6, August 2014, Pages 771-778.

<sup>8</sup> Review: A systematic review of the impact of physical activity programmes on social and emotional well-being in at-risk youth. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*. David R. Lubans, Ron C. Plotnikoff, Nicole J. Lubans

<sup>9</sup> Schijf, M. Allison, P. Von Wold, K. "Sail Training: A Systematic Review" in *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership* 2017, Vol.9, No. 2, pp.167-180.

<sup>10</sup> "Sail Training: using acculturation to activate a socio-cultural or natural pedagogy", Eric Fletcher in *Pedagogy Culture and Society*, February 2020

# Theory of Change

## Purpose of a programme-level Theory of Change

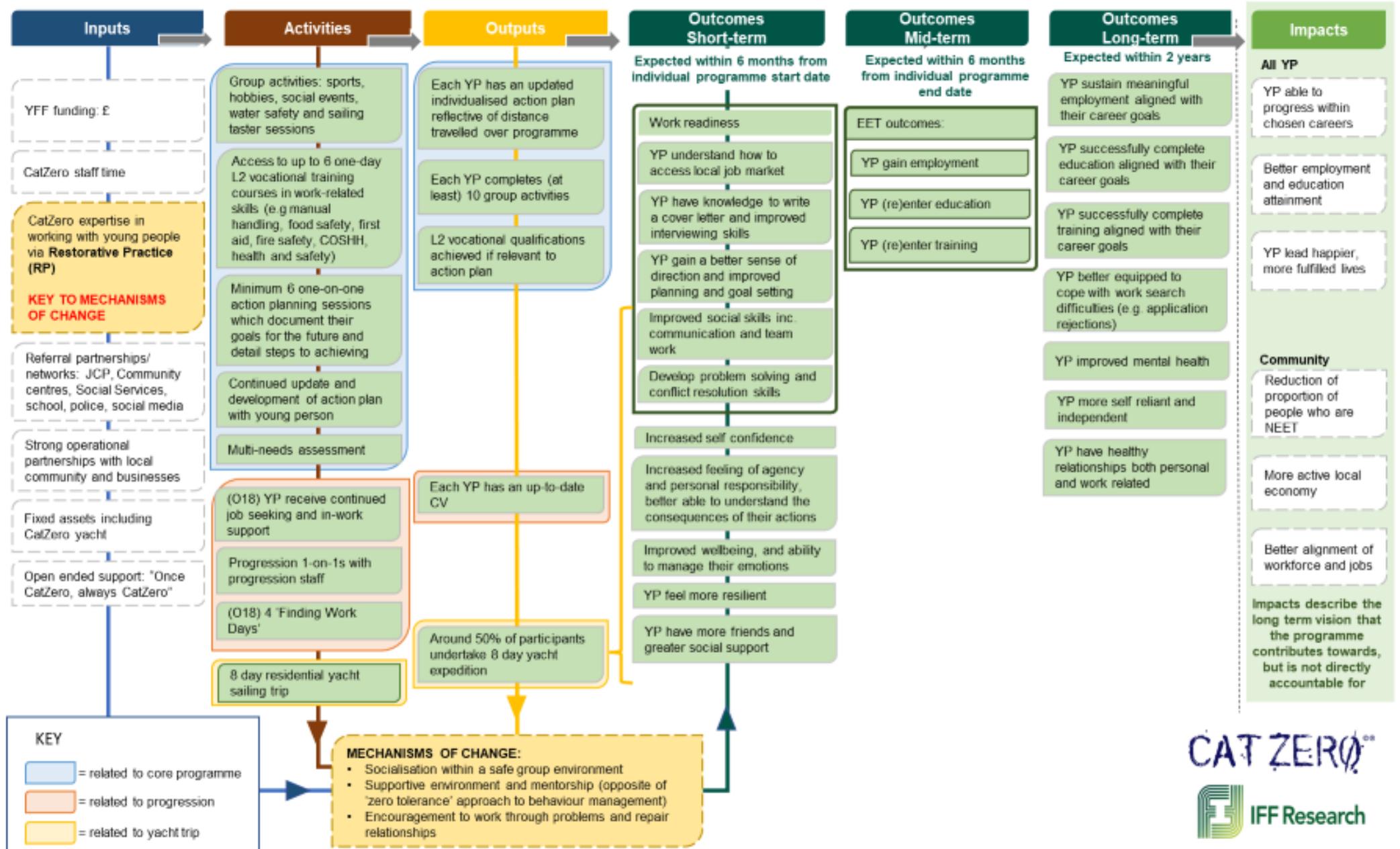
This section sets out the Theories of Change for the CatZero YFF-funded programme for the over-18 age group and the under-18 age group. A theory of change captures a shared understanding of the programme, illustrates the mechanisms for change and how activities are to be translated into impacts. More specifically, it depicts the physical inputs and activities of the programme, the short-to-medium term outcomes that should be achieved through these processes, and the long-term impacts that should eventually be realised through the programme.

## Background to the YFF-funded programme Theory of Change

CatZero's approach to intervention is intended to be holistic and therefore as well-rounded as possible. A young person's level of engagement with, and future success in any aspect of EET will be heavily influenced by their home environment, so CatZero aims to address that aspect of their lives too, through the same Restorative Practice approach employed in all their programmes. As a result, some participants in the YFF-funded programme were also simultaneously involved with a CatZero Full Families programme that aims to work with family units to bring about positive outcomes by improving relationships within the family and harnessing the collective to address problems. This overlap applied to approximately one third of the under 18s on the YFF-funded programme (five out of the 14 participants in the under 18 group were also on the Full Families programme). A description of how the YFF-funded programme interacts with the Full Families programme is included in the following chapter. However, as the Full Families programme is outside the scope of this evaluation work, we have not attempted to model how participation in Full Families may interact with the outcomes that the YFF-funded programme aims to achieve.

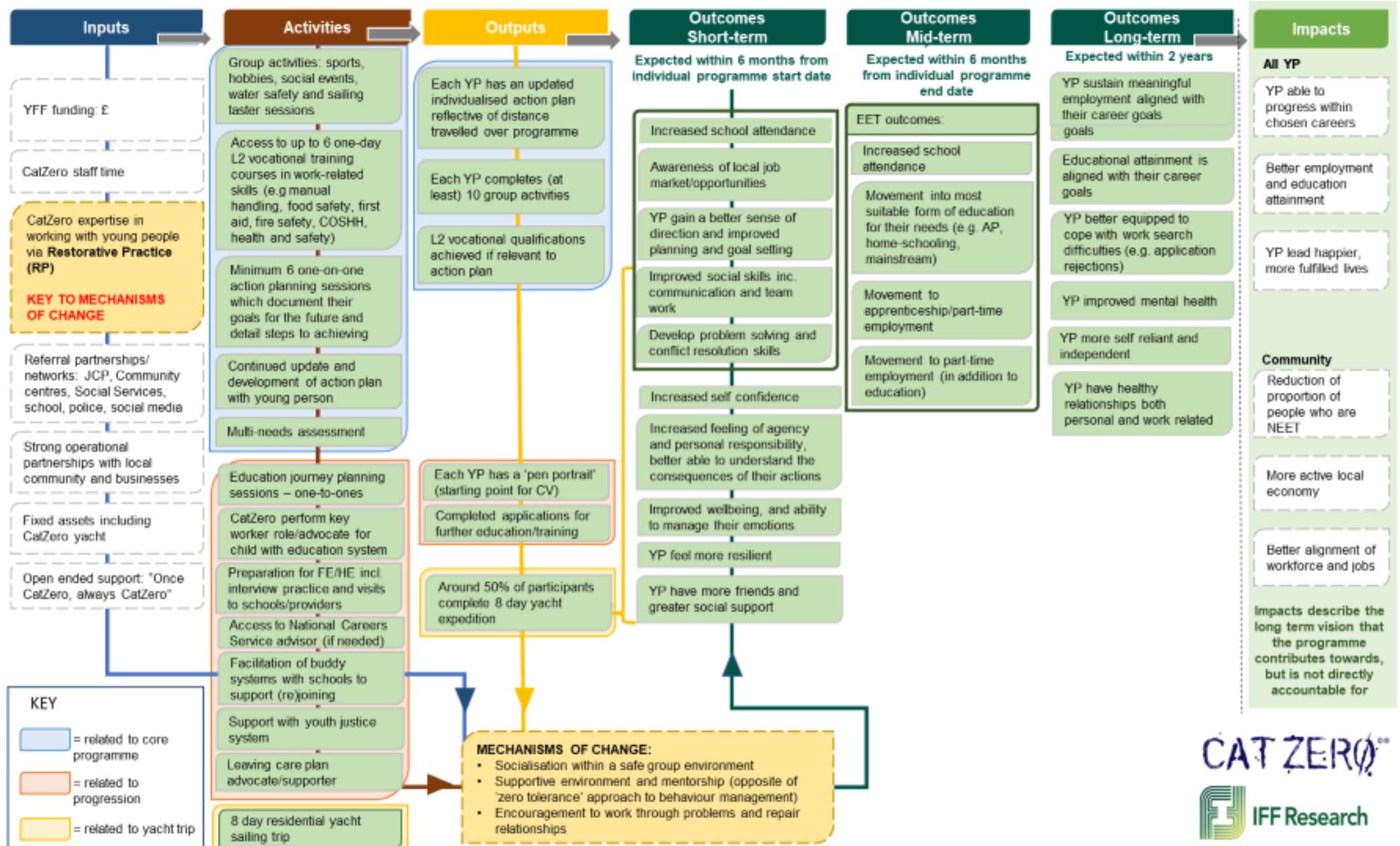
# Theory of Change for Participants Aged 18 and Over

**Rationale:** Helping young people overcome NEET status or risk by building skills to help them go into further education, training or into sustainable meaningful employment.



# Theory of Change for Participants Aged Under 18

Rationale: Helping young people overcome NEET status or risk by building skills to help them go into further education, training or into sustainable meaningful employment.



## Assumptions underlying the Theories of Change

There are nine assumptions made about the programme that will need to occur for the outcomes and impacts shown in the theories of change to come about:

1. When provided with the right support, YP will aim for EET outcomes.
2. Employment is a key aspect of living a happy, fulfilled life.
3. There are sufficient EET opportunities in the local area to meet demand from YP aligned with career goals.
4. Providing support now will allow YP to tackle future challenges, separate to the programme.
5. Other providers and agencies are willing to work in partnership, are available, and have capacity.
6. YP are willing to engage with Restorative Practice approach and “work with” the programme (CatZero want to empower YP so approach the programme as a joint enterprise between them and CatZero staff).
7. It is necessary to deliver bespoke support to individuals with the levels and types of needs taking part in the programme.
8. All involved in delivering the programme (CatZero staff and other external facilitators) have the skills and capacity required.
9. The programme is able to go ahead and be completed as planned.

Assumptions one to four, and seven, relate to the mid-term and long-term outcomes in the ToC. They outline the expectation that young people will aim for, achieve, and sustain EET outcomes (assumption 3: if the opportunities exist) when given the type of holistic support that CatZero offer. Assumptions 5-6 and 8-9 relate to the successful delivery of the programme.

## Discussion of outcomes in the Theory of Change

The programme offers similar activities for the under and over 18 age groups, the major difference between the two being the timing of the sessions. However, the outputs and outcomes expected to be achieved as a result of the programme are different for each age group, reflecting the goals and needs associated with the respective age bracket. This means that the goals and outcomes for the under 18s are more related to keeping them in education, while for the over 18 they are focused on work readiness and gaining sustainable, meaningful employment, as represented in the two theories of change above.

At the end of the programme, the aim was that all young people leaving the programme should have completed at least the minimum number of group activities and relevant vocational qualifications (around 200 L2 one-day qualifications completed among 50 people) and should have updated, individualised action plans, articulated, documented goals for the future and a step-by-step plan to achieve them, and an extended social network from attendance and participation in activities.

Additionally, from the progression activities (on red background), the aim was that the over 18s would leave with a full CV, while the under 18s would walk away with a “pen portrait” as a starting point for a future CV, and a completed application for further education or training. The young people who went on the sailing trip (yellow background) were intended to come away having spent substantial time outside of their normal environment, having had an immersive experience working in a team, gaining sailing-related technical skills and enduring physical and mental challenges of sailing, which would act as a boost towards their short-term outcomes regardless of age. The specific outcomes expected to be improved by the sailing trip are marked within the elbow arrows in the two theories of change.

The short-term outcomes presented in the theories of change were expected to manifest about 6 months on from each individual starting the programme as this was considered to be a reasonable amount of time for the programme to start having its desired effect upon participants. The mid-term outcomes were expected within 6 months of each individual leaving the programme as this was considered a reasonable amount of time for a participant to have identified, applied for and gained access to EET opportunities. These are divided into EET specific outcomes, presented in the theories of change in the dark border, and wider social and wellbeing outcomes such as increased self-confidence, feeling of agency, resilience, and improved wellbeing, which are the same for both age groups.

For the over 18s the EET outcomes short term intended outcomes were:

- Increased work readiness (i.e., skills, aptitudes, and attitudes employers expect job seekers to have),
- Better understanding of how to access the local job market,
- Able to write a cover letter,
- Improved interviewing skills,
- Improved team working skills,
- Improved communication skills,
- Improved problem-solving skills,

- Improved conflict resolution skills in the short term and;
- Gaining employment or re-entering education or training in the mid-term outcomes.

For the under 18s, the EET short term outcomes were expected to be:

- Increased school attendance,
- Awareness of local job market,
- Better sense of direction,
- Improved goal setting and planning and;
- Similar improvements in social and problem-solving skills as the older group

In the mid-term they were intended to have:

- Sustained increased school attendance, or alternatively a movement into the most suitable form of education for their needs (with support from CatZero staff where necessary) and;
- Apprenticeships or part time employment (sometimes in addition to education).

The long-term outcomes are expected to take place within two years of the end of the programme and are very similar for the under and over 18s, with the only differences arising from when each group is expected to have finished education and/or training. In the long term, young people are expected to have their educational attainment and/or meaningful employment aligned with their career goals, and to be better equipped to deal with job search difficulties, and more self-reliant and independent, as well as having improved mental health and healthy relationships, both personal and work related.

### Discussion of mechanisms of change in the Theory of Change

The mechanisms of change (i.e., how the activities and outputs relate to outcomes) are driven by the use of Restorative Practice and Outcomes Based Accountability as foundational principles in the delivery of the programme. Specifically, the mechanisms that underpin the programme (which are identical for both age groups), are:

- Socialisation within a safe group environment
- A supportive environment and mentorship
- Encouragement to work through problems and repair relationships

Rather than specific actions or moments in time, these mechanisms are enacted constantly through the ways in which CatZero staff interact with participants and the supportive social environment they aim to foster. It is expected that over time, regular exposure to these mechanisms (which underpin how CatZero deliver the programme content) will result in participants achieving the short-term outcomes outlined in the ToC, which (based on assumptions 1-4 and seven) should then lead to the mid-term and long-term outcomes.

Often the young people participating are feeling isolated and lack self-belief. Through taking part in the activities that form the framework of the programme (outlined above), young people are given the opportunity to work alongside others and form social bonds in an unpressurised setting. The CatZero staff work closely with the participants and make efforts to get to know their circumstances and their aspirations in great depth. This continuity of contact and depth of interest in them as individuals can be a new and empowering experience for some of these young people. Individuals are encouraged to set their own goals and then discuss their progress towards them in action planning sessions. Through this mentorship, young people come to realise that they have the power to make positive changes in their lives.

When they are delivering group activities, CatZero staff use a Restorative Practice approach to address any anti-social behaviour or other problems that arise within the group. Individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for their impact on the group and to seek to repair relationships. This helps young people to improve their interactions with other people which ultimately makes them better placed to move towards EET outcomes.

These mechanisms link the inputs, activities, and outputs to the short-term outcomes in the Theory of Change. Movement towards the longer-term outcomes result from young people achieving fundamental changes in how they view their own capabilities and the life trajectory that are expected as a result of taking part in the programme. As a result of their participation they:

- Feel empowered to make positive changes in their life
- Feel part of and able to contribute to their community
- Feel more able to cope with adverse life situations

By realising these personal changes, CatZero expect that young people will naturally aspire to and be capable of sustaining long term EET outcomes (as set out in the ToC assumptions).

## Programme content

This section sets out the activities that programme participants were expected to undertake from the point of recruitment of the YFF-funded CatZero programme, to completion of the programme and any follow-up support they might receive. It also sets out what this involves for CatZero staff and the points at which participant data was collected. This is shown visually in the participant journey map below.

### Recruitment and on-boarding

Recruitment was planned to take place on a rolling basis with young people joining the programme throughout 2021. Although much of their programme followed an established pattern, this rolling recruitment deviated from CatZero's usual model of recruiting cohorts and working with them over a shorter period.

CatZero were used established recruitment strategies involving direct outreach from CatZero staff into the communities in and around Hull and Grimsby, self-referrals resultant from word-of-mouth awareness of programme, as well as referrals from partner organisations such as schools, colleges, JobCentre Plus, and other points of contact for young people such as key social workers.

Once the young person decided to join the programme, an expression of interest form was completed, followed by an initial discussion and the completion of the application form with support from CatZero staff. The intention was that this would be conducted face to face, but due to Covid restrictions this was not always possible, and some were conducted over the phone. At this stage CatZero staff were able to make judgements as to the suitability of potential participants to take part in the programme from a safe-guarding perspective. For example, if staff had concerns that an individual might pose a risk to other participants, or to themselves, they may decide to not admit that individual to the programme.

Our participant journey map below includes a stage for "assessment of eligibility". However, beyond geographical restrictions and age thresholds, CatZero did not assess applicants against formal recruitment criteria. They intended that participation would be based on an individual's own interest, motivation, and willingness to join. Although programme participants were largely expected to be NEET or considered to be "at risk" of NEET, no formal definition of this was used. Typically, "at risk" participants were in school or had recently left education and had been referred to CatZero by schools or colleges. Assessments as to whether a young person was "at risk" of NEET

and therefore qualified for the programme were based on the judgements of referral partners and CatZero staff during the recruitment and application stages.

There were three cohorts that made up the YFF-funded CatZero programme:

- Hull-based 18 – 24 year olds
- Grimsby-based 18 – 24 year olds
- Grimsby-based 14 – 17 year olds

CatZero allowed for some flexibility in allocation to cohorts based on who they felt the participant's closest peer group would be, for example, a 17-year-old living independently could be allocated to a group that is nominally for 18 – 24-year-olds, on the basis that they would have more in common with this cohort in terms of experiences.

As part of the onboarding into the programme, young people had another one-to-one meeting with one of the CatZero staff, where they completed Section 1 of their participant Questionnaire to better understand their particular needs, wellbeing, and motivation. This multi-needs assessment covered information about lifestyle, health and engagement with risky behaviours as well as information about career and learning aspirations. This information was then used to create a personalised Action Plan. Part of the Action Plan was three key goals for their time with CatZero based on the three things they most wanted to change about their lives.

The length of the process from recruitment to completion of onboarding depended on the participant and their willingness to engage but could be achieved in under a week.

### Core programme content

Under the YFF-funded programme, young people complete a program of activities that vary depending on their individual needs. The service is split into three cohorts, broadly defined by the combination of age (under 18/over 18) and geography (Hull/Grimsby). Overall, the program aims to deliver a 'core program' of up to one year of engagement with young people consisting of the following elements:

- **Group activities** – for example sports, hobbies, social events, water safety and sailing 'taster' sessions;
- **Qualifications** – for example Level 2, one-day qualification in work-related skills;

- **Progression** – education, training, and employment related tasks or events. For example, visits/exposure to local employers, interview practice or help with training course applications;
- **Action Planning** – 1-1 format where an action plan is created and updated, with new challenges and progress against actions recorded;
- **Sailing Challenge** – the option to take part (as an active crew member) in a sailing voyage lasting several days.

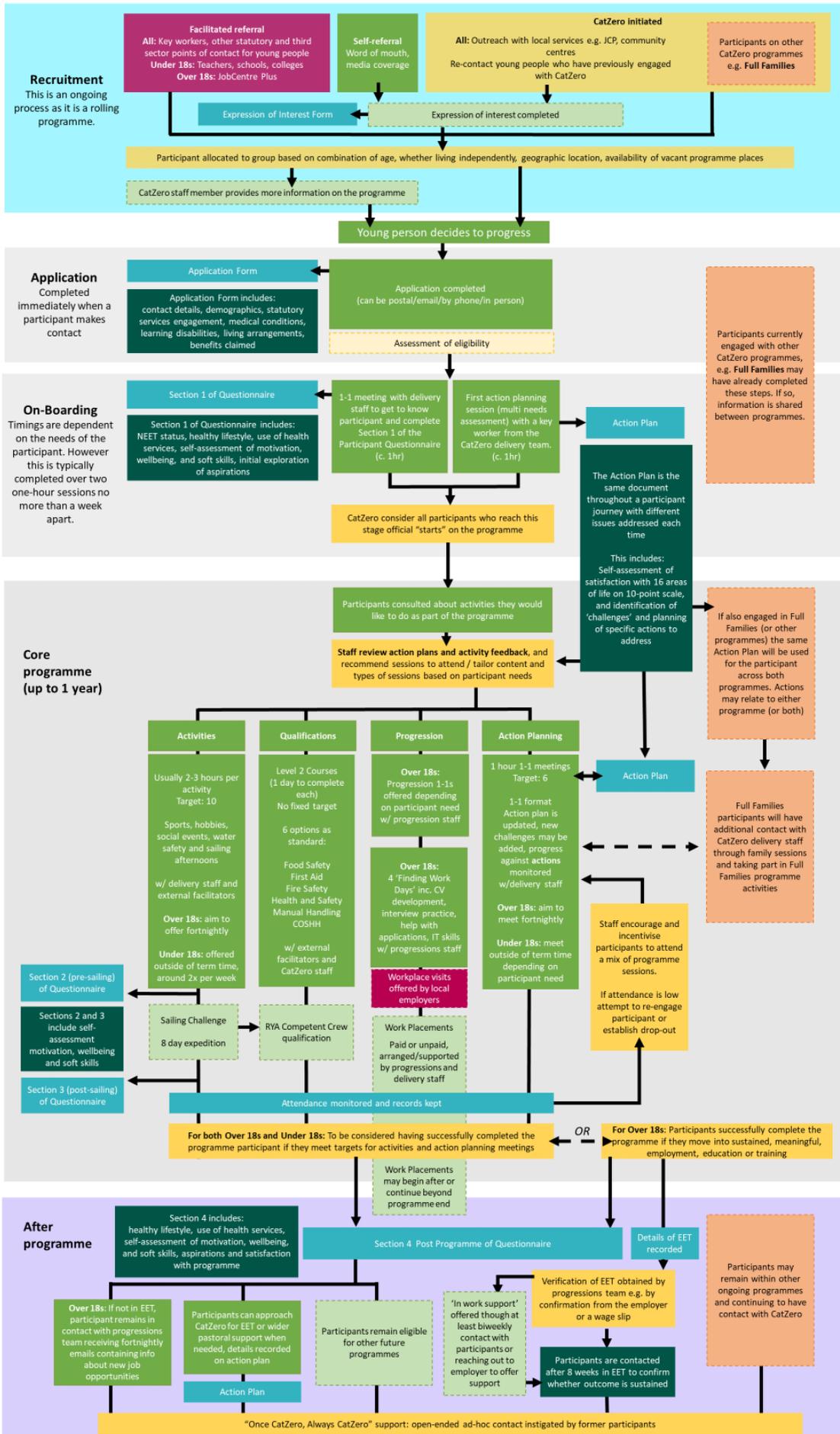
Within each element of the programme, CatZero staff take a Restorative Practice approach in that they aim provide a highly supportive environment, to work with the participants (rather than doing things to or for participants), and to encourage healthy relationships.

### Group activities

Group activities typically lasted around 2-3 hours and took place on at least a weekly basis for the over 18s. While individual participants were not expected to take part in every activity, the intention was that the range and frequency of activities offered would mean that they would have opportunities to attend an activity at least once a fortnight. For those aged under 18, activities primarily took place outside of term time although on some occasions after school activities were arranged.



## CatZero YFF Programme Participant Journey



Activities were organised and facilitated by CatZero staff and involved external facilitators where needed/appropriate and cover a wide range of options, from sports like tennis and football, to hobbies and crafts, cooking, day trips to the beach, as well as water safety training and sailing afternoons on the CatZero yacht. The activities were organised based on what the programme participants told staff they would be most interested in and what they felt would be most beneficial in helping them achieve their personal goals.

The aim of the group activities was to help young people improve their social skills, add variety to their daily routine, find new hobbies and interests, and build transferable skills which could help them achieve EET goals. Attendance in any activity was optional, and participants could take part in as many activities as available.

### Qualifications and progression

**Qualifications** were Level 2, 1-day courses offered to participants over 16, in skills such as food safety, first aid, fire safety, general health and safety, manual handling, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), etc. These were organised by CatZero staff but delivered by registered professionals and young people were encouraged to undertake all the ones that they felt might be useful for future employment. If a participant wanted to pursue a qualification outside of the 'standard' courses offered, CatZero staff would try to facilitate this where possible. As with other elements of the programme, gaining specific qualifications or a minimum number of qualifications was not a prerequisite for completion of the programme.

As part of the **progression**, element participants on the programme were also offered direct help with employment, by specialist CatZero staff. For the over 18s, progression focused on helping them move on to the next stage of Education, Employment or Training (EET) as identified in their action plan. The programme design included 4 "Finding Work Days" focused on CV development, job interview practice, IT skills and help with job and training course applications, alongside personalised one-on-one sessions with CatZero staff, where they could find out about different job opportunities, and receive any information and advice. Also included in the design of the programme were workplace visits to local employers and the facilitation of work placements, most notably with Sewell Group in Hull who CatZero have a longstanding relationship with. The progression element for under 18s was focused on keeping young people in school, or helping them find the right level and type of education for their needs and interests.

### Action planning

Action planning sessions were hour-long one-to-one meetings where participants reviewed their progress, amended goals, and added new challenges. They were intended to take place every

fortnight for over 18s and during school holidays for under 18s. The action planning sessions drew on an Outcomes Based Accountability approach in that the purpose was to identify problems and work out the solutions and actions that would help them to progress towards achieving their goals. Throughout their time on the programme, the Action Plan was regularly revised and adapted in one-to-one sessions and was used as a marker of the distance travelled by the young person.

### Sailing trip

The final component was the 8-day residential sailing trip which gave a group of young people the option to live on and sail the yacht together. The yacht is an asset that CatZero owns and integrates into delivery of many of their programmes. The sailing trip was intended to provide a safe yet challenging environment for the young people, where they could overcome their preconceptions of their limitations and gain a better understanding of and respect for teamwork, the need to respect others and perseverance.

Although an important aspect of the programme, as with all other activities, participation in the sailing trip was not compulsory. Also, participation on the sailing trip was not available to everyone, for example those with underlying health issues that prevented them from participating and those assessed to be not ready by CatZero staff. The opportunity of going on the sailing trip was used as a motivator to get people to engage with the rest of the programme in a meaningful way.

### Defining completion

To be counted as having 'completed' the programme, a participant had to have attended a minimum of 10 activities and 6 action planning one-to-one sessions. Additionally, participants over 18 were considered to have successfully completed the programme if they had moved into sustained, meaningful, employment, education, or training, regardless of the number of programme elements attended/completed.

Participants who attended the programme until it ended in December 2021, but did not meet these attendance targets or move on to EET during the programme, are included in the 53 participants who took part in the programme, but have not been recorded as 'completing' the programme. The rates of completion are discussed later in the report.

CatZero also aimed for participants to complete up to 4 qualifications, if relevant to them, over the year, but this was not a requirement to be counted as having completed the programme.

## Post programme

After the end of the programme, CatZero offer “in-work support” for those who obtained a job, by liaising with and offering support to both them and the employer in order to make the transition period more manageable and increase retention rates. The type of in-work support CatZero offer is not defined by a pre-agreed set of actions, tools or time spent, but is broad and holistic in nature. They aim to provide a supportive environment outside of work or education that many of the programme participants would otherwise not have. CatZero staff will also liaise with employers and educational facilities on behalf of the participant if there are any problems (for example related to their attendance, productivity, or attitude) to explain contributory factors and try to find solutions to address the problems. An illustrative example of this is of a participant on a previous programme (not YFF-funded) who had been thrown out of the family home and was subsequently unable to find permanent accommodation and was not used to budgeting. These problems were understandably impacting their ability to maintain an apprenticeship they had recently begun. CatZero worked with the young person to address these problems and communicated with the employer in order to maintain a positive relationship between them and the young person. With this support they were able to complete the apprenticeship and were offered a permanent role. Due to this type of in-work support, CatZero staff maintain that employers are more likely to employ an “at risk” young person who has taken part in a CatZero programme because they believe that they will be effectively supported outside of work.

A key ethos of the programme is “Once CatZero, always CatZero”, meaning participants can approach CatZero on an open-ended, ad-hoc basis for EET or wider pastoral support when needed, and these details will be recorded on their action plan. Those who are still not in EET can remain in contact with the progressions team, receiving fortnightly emails containing info about new job opportunities and resources. Furthermore, although not a common occurrence, participants remain eligible to enrol on other programmes if they meet the criteria.

# Operation of the model in practice

## Overview of programme management

There were three CatZero staff members dedicated to the delivery of the YFF-funded programme who were overseen by a Programme Manager (who also had oversight over other CatZero programmes). While integrated with the YFF-funded programme, the sailing elements of the programme are delivered by a separate dedicated sailing team at CatZero. The three core team members were supported by the CatZero Administration and Progressions teams. It is also worth noting that a culture exists at CatZero in which staff will pitch in and help out their colleagues on other teams if needed.

## Characteristics of programme participants

As set out in the previous chapter, the 12-month programme was split across two locations, Hull and Grimsby, and was also split across two age groups, over 18s and under 18s. The participants were placed into one of three groups:

**Figure 1: Participants by group**

	Number of participants counted as completing the programme or attended until the end of the programme
Hull Over 18s	19
Grimsby Over 18s	20
Under 18s	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>

In addition to the 53 participants set out in the table above, eight young people started the programme but stopped engaging with the programme and were recorded as “early leavers”. Early leavers have not been included in the analysis in this report due to their small number and because little or no data was collected for these young people. An important consideration when reviewing the findings of this report is that the omission of early leavers from analysis may bias findings towards participants who did attend or complete the programme in full, who it can be reasonably assumed would be more likely to feel positively towards the programme.

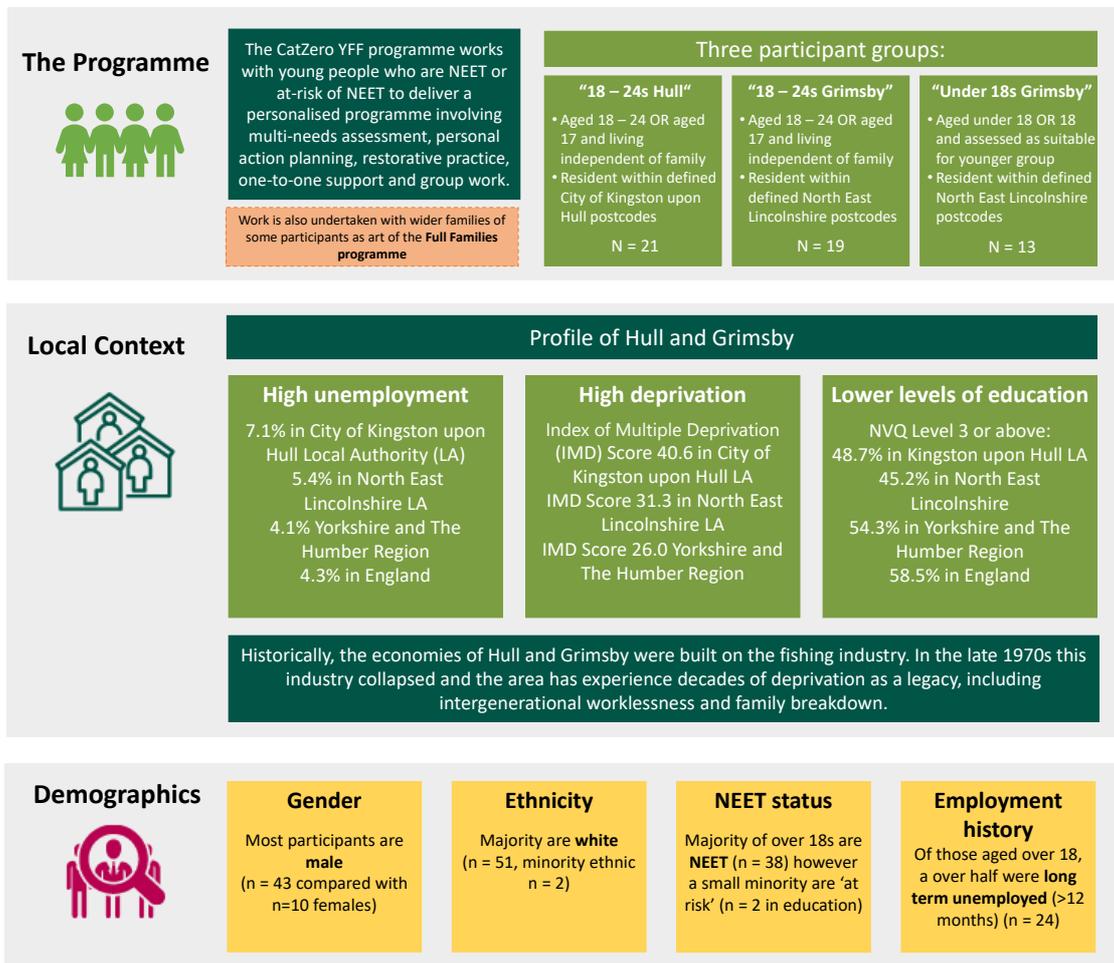
Recruitment was conducted on a rolling basis throughout 2021. The majority started the programme within the first 6 months of the year but there were a small number who started the programme as late as September 2021. Recruitment involved direct outreach from CatZero staff into the communities in and around Hull and Grimsby, self-referrals resultant from word-of-mouth awareness of programme, as well as referrals from partner organisations such as schools, colleges, JobCentre Plus, and other points of contact for young people such as key social workers. We created a “Needs Profile” to visually represent the type of young people who were counted as having completed the programme (see below).

We analysed anonymised participant data to create the Needs Profile, and have chosen in the below to highlight the following characteristics, to demonstrate the range of individual circumstances that participants have experienced:

- Specifics about the programme including the split of locations and ages
- The local context of youth unemployment, deprivation, and education levels
- Demographics of those in the programme and their vulnerabilities
- The characteristics of the young people in the group
- Aspirations at the beginning of their CatZero journey

As is shown in Figure 2, there was a wide range of complex needs and vulnerabilities across the 53 participants who completed or attended until the of the programme. Roughly half of participants had been diagnosed with a mental health condition (27/53) and almost half had learning difficulties (21/53). In comparison to the rest of the UK population, participants were far more likely to have been in care at some point in the lives (6/53) and to have experienced homelessness (6/53). Roughly a quarter had been the victims of crime (12/53). The specific challenges participants faced varied a great deal on an individual-by-individual basis; however, it was common for programme participants to lack confidence, motivation, and social skills; to feel isolated; and to suffer from anxiety. While there was no ‘typical’ programme participant in terms of the type of support required and personal objectives, this cohort of participants could broadly be described as facing multiple and significant challenges to accessing and sustaining EET outcomes.

Figure 2: CatZero Participants Needs Profile



### Vulnerabilities

	<b>Mental Health</b> Approx. one in two have a mental health condition (U18: n = 3; 18+ n = 24) Approx. two fifths have a learning disability (U18: n = 7; 18+ n = 14)
	<b>Experience of Care</b> Just over one in ten had been in care at some point (U18: n=1; 18+ n=5)
	<b>Experience of Crime</b> One in five had been a victim of crime (U18: n = 4; 18+ n = 8)
	<b>Aspirations</b> In general when young people join CatZero their career aspirations are low
	<b>Homelessness</b> Approx. one in ten were homeless at the point of joining (n = 6)
	<b>Drug and alcohol issues</b> Experienced by both young people directly and within community
	<b>Poor parenting</b> And high levels of Adverse Child Experiences (ACEs)

### Characteristics

The following issues are common amongst participants:

Low self-confidence	Low levels of motivation	Low emotional self-regulation
Lack of sense of direction or ambition	Social skills deficits	Limited range of hobbies or interests

Participants are likely to be experiencing many of the above, in combination, and some to a very high degree, that is to the extent that these issues prevent them from engaging in day-to-day life

### Aspirations

Initial EET goals on joining the programme reflect the varied range of support needs amongst participants, from lighter touch to more intensive:

Far from EET → Closer to EET

Gain skills to live independently	Explore career/education options	Pass GCSE Level Maths/English	Gain skilled or semi-skilled employment	University course application
Remain in education or rejoin mainstream school	Gain work or voluntary experience	Find entry level work	Undertake Level 2 training in vocational subject	Obtain place on Level 3 Apprenticeship

### Interaction with the Full Families Programme

Running alongside, but separate to, the YFF-funded programme was the Full Families programme. This is a programme in which CatZero work with family units to address problems in a holistic way with the intention of the whole family benefitting. Seven participants took part in both the YFF-funded programme and the Full Families programme – of these seven, five were in the under 18s group.

The programmes are similar in that the family unit will have Action Plans and meetings with CatZero staff to discuss their needs and objectives and set actions to meet those. However, a participant on both will have separate plans for each programme, will meet with programme dedicated staff and take part in separate activities for both programmes. Naturally there will be some crossover in content within the separate plans but from a practical point of view, the participant is on two programmes which are run independently of each other.

For these participants, staff note the benefits of taking part in both. Parental buy-in is seen as highly beneficial as it means the participant is more likely to engage fully with the programme. There is also the benefit to the family when they see improvements that take place as a result of taking part in the YFF-funded programme.

In all cases, the participants were referred to the YFF-funded programme from the Full Families programme. Attempts were made to recruit in the opposite direction, but this proved to be far more difficult.

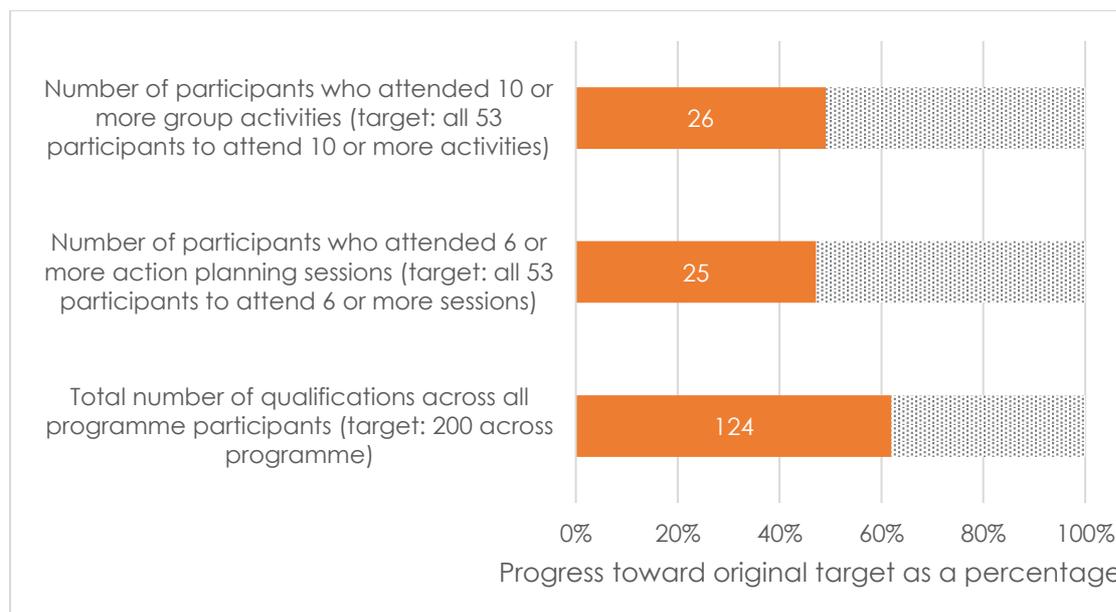
## Delivery of the programme

Sixty one participants started the programme, eight of whom were counted as 'early leavers' i.e., they were not counted as having attended the programme until it's end in December 2021, or attended the expected number of sessions, and were not recorded as progressing to EET. One of these was in the under 18 group and the remaining seven were split between Hull and Grimsby over 18 groups. In the MI data shared with IFF Research, the reason given for leaving early was that they stopped engaging with the programme. While reasons for not engaging with the programme will be specific for each individual, a reasonable assumption would be that Covid was a significant contributing factor in some instances due to the personal impacts this had on participants and due to the limitations for CatZero to engage participants face-to-face. Early leavers have not been included in the analysis presented in this report. As explained above, this risks a bias towards more positive experiences and outcomes of those who did complete or attend programme in full.

Hence a total of 53 individuals reached the end of the programme i.e., they were still considered to be engaged at the end of the 12-month period or they were known to have progressed to EET. This is in excess of the 50 participants that CatZero were targeting.

However not all of these were 'completers' by CatZero's definition. The data presented in the table below shows that just under half of the participants took part in the intended minimum number of group activities and action planning sessions, and that the total number of qualifications gained across the programme also fell short of their target.

**Figure 3: Delivery of programme elements against original targets (including ‘early completers’)**



Seventeen out of the 39 participants in the over 18 groups met the attendance targets of attending six or more action planning sessions and also attending 10 or more group activities. None of the 14 participants in the under 18 group met these attendance targets. A further 11 participants, all from the over 18 groups, are counted as ‘early completers’, despite not meeting the attendance criteria as they progressed to EET before the end of the programme. In total, 28 of the 53 participants met the criteria for having ‘completed’ the programme, all of whom were in the over 18 group. The under 18 age group had lower attendance levels, particularly for the action planning sessions, and achieved fewer qualifications on average than the over 18s. More detailed participation data and commentary for the core elements of the programme is included in Appendix B.

### Progression support

CatZero staff were satisfied that they were able to deliver the CV building and interview training elements as originally intended. The Progressions team lead on this part of the programme and, as illustrated by the quote below, this is an area of work they take pride in and feel they give programme participants an advantage in the job market.

“The most rewarding part of our work is to produce their first professional CV and we take it seriously. We learnt a lot from other partners - other training providers, colleges, jobcentres... They all say this is how you do CVs and ours is highly regarded. [We do] Different CVs for different jobs and adapt things to suit individuals.”

The work experience element of the programme was delivered in part. Originally, four 'Finding Work Days' were planned but this proved to be impossible to deliver due to Covid restrictions. The information session and work placements with the construction group Sewell went ahead as planned. However, due to Covid, other work experience days and visits to educational institutes were cancelled. The impact of Covid is explored further in the next [section](#).

### Sailing trip

The sailing trip went ahead as planned and was considered a great success by CatZero staff and programme participants. 19 programme participants (36%) took part in the 'long sail' to St. Katharine's Dock, London and back. The journey took a total of eight days and programme participants were responsible (with oversight from programme staff and volunteers) for all aspects of a successful sail including navigation, meal preparation, cleaning, and maintenance. Each day of the sail, programme participants and other crew member would take part in a group discussion to work through personal concerns and challenges facing the group. Prior to the main sail, 35 participants (66%) took part in related activities including a visit to the yacht, to the boat museum, and a 'taster sail' within the local area. It was through these prior activities and through discussion that participants could indicate a willingness to take part in the main sail and CatZero could assess 'sail readiness'.

## The impact of Covid and other challenges on the delivery of the programme

The impact of Covid on programme delivery was unavoidable. To comply with government laws and guidelines around gatherings and service provision, parts of the programme had to be significantly adapted and opportunities for face-to-face engagement with the participants were severely limited. The following sections set out how different elements of the programme were delivered and adapted in light of Covid laws and guidelines that were in place.

### Group activities

Due to Covid laws and guidelines, opportunities for indoor gatherings were limited, as were the number of participants who could take part in an activity on any given day. CatZero were resourceful in adapting plans and providing alternative activities which meant that participants, on the whole, did not miss out on opportunities to take part in activities that they had shown an interest in. Social activities that might ordinarily have taken place inside were moved to outdoor venues such as the beach and activities such as hikes and tennis were facilitated. Further workarounds included hiring additional mini-buses to transport participants and any indoor activities would be adapted to allow for social distancing.

### Action Planning

Ideally, the action planning meetings would all have taken place face-to-face as this helps to build rapport, and it is more conducive to a productive and engaging meeting. Due to Covid, this was not always possible during the 12-month programme which meant that meetings often took place over the phone or occasionally in a socially distanced outdoor setting which it was felt did not work as well as face-to-face meetings in a suitable venue, due to challenges in building trust and rapport.

“[We] had 3 or 4 referrals during lockdown but struggled with [the] rest because could not meet face to face and build trust.

**Staff**

“With no face-to-face communication it’s hard to build rapport.”

**Staff**

Staff reflected that because of this, it was more difficult than usual to encourage programme participants to attend the full number of meetings originally intended.

### Qualifications and progression support

The vocational training and work readiness elements of the programme were perhaps the most greatly impacted by Covid. This was due to factors outside of CatZero’s control such as training

providers pausing/stopping courses and businesses cancelling work experience days that had been arranged for participants. In order to deliver this part of the programme, CatZero had to make significant adaptations. This included:

- ‘Holistic drop-in sessions’ whereby they would arrange for multiple training providers to be present on the same day so that participants could engage with them that way.
- Delivering qualifications via online courses but this proved to be expensive and was not suitable for all participants due to them not owning a computer or other required equipment.

### Other delivery challenges

For the dedicated delivery staff, the programme design presented a number of challenges. Firstly, the logistical challenge of delivering a programme between Hull and Grimsby which are separated by the Humber and are 33 miles apart by road. Driving between locations is time consuming and had to be factored into planning. A further logistical challenge related specifically to the participants who were in school as activities and meetings had to be delivered outside of school time or arrangements would need to be made with the school to deliver activities as part of their school day.

As well as these logistical challenges, there was a wide variation in the needs and expected outcomes for participants whose ages ranged from 14 – 24. Also, the way in which delivery staff engaged with the participants of different ages needed to be different. This meant that the extent to which delivery for the different age groups could be combined was limited. Staff had to be cognisant of this and flexible enough to alter the delivery setting and approach for the different age groups.

Delivering the action planning sessions for the under 18s was a particular challenge as illustrated by the quote below. Staff interviewed were in agreement that this age group were naturally less engaged with the purpose and structure of the meetings and recognised that they preferred the more informal parts of the programme.

“Under 18s struggled with this [action planning], and fewer participants attended despite Covid safety measures in place... 14 and 15-year-olds just want to have fun.”

**Staff**

# Participant experiences

## Recruitment and expectations

Participants taking part in the programme described it in broad terms. They talked about CatZero as an organisation that ‘could help with their problems’ – whatever they happened to be. They did not always talk in terms of expecting help to achieve EET outcomes, often the changes that they were looking to achieve were much broader e.g., relating to making friends, getting out of the home more or improving their health.

The following quotes are typical of the broad understanding that participants had about the programme and about the topics which were discussed during onboarding and action planning meetings.

“They bring you in [during the onboarding process] to see what things you have issues with. Then they talk to you about how you can improve those issues and solve those problems. They try to do that in a fun way. So they can help with that issue and other issues alongside that. They’ll give you as much support as you need to work on those problems ...they help with whatever issues you may have.”

**Participant**

“They help with a million different things - money, family, yourself...”

**Participant**

A common theme across the interviews with the participants was that they felt CatZero staff were uniquely capable of providing the support they needed to achieve positive outcomes. CatZero staff were described as “approachable” and “friendly” – the kind of people who would “listen” and work *with* the participant towards their goals. In this sense there was a recognition of the value of both the Restorative Practice approach and the Outcomes Based Accountability.

“I would describe CatZero as an amazing charity, they help you in any way they can. They never give up and the staff are the most down to earth people you can meet. The overall experience of CatZero changed my life around for the good.”

**Participant**

CatZero was also often described as “something new” and as “different” – this was both in the sense of them being different to other organisations they had previously engaged with and were not

suitable to their needs (such as schools) and in terms of giving them the opportunity to try new and different things.

“I wanted to be a part of it because I was told there were things I could do that I wouldn't be able to do otherwise. Break my usual routine of doing nothing.”

**Participant**

While participants did spontaneously speak about the yacht trip among their motivations for participating, only a small minority spoke about this as the main or best part of the programme. Rather than being the main selling point, the yacht trip and activities surrounding it were seen by participants as just part of the overall programme.

### Reflections on the programme and CatZero

Each participant's journey on the programme was unique. Nonetheless, there were key consistencies in participant journeys. All participants we interviewed, regardless of age, reported receiving the same inputs as per the Theory of Change. Some of these inputs such as staff time, expertise in Restorative Practice and open-ended support are experienced through direct engagement between staff and participants. Participants were particularly impressed by and praised these elements of the delivery model. During onboarding onto the programme, almost all stated they instantly felt supported and immediately noticed the friendly and approachable nature of the staff. From those we spoke to, this support was present throughout the duration of their time on the programme. Many noted how they always felt heard and supported which ultimately helped them moved towards their outcomes.

“They're always respectful, they're not pushy. They're incredibly trusting, you give them respect, they give you respect.”

**Participant**

All the participants we interviewed cited how beneficial they found the main programme elements (action planning, group activities, qualifications, and progression) to be in developing hard skills (qualifications, CV development, interview preparation) and soft skills too (overcoming social anxiety, building confidence, improving social skills). They could also clearly see how developing these skills would help them achieve their immediate wellbeing goals (as expected in the short-term outcomes in the ToC) and to achieve EET goals (as expected in the mid-term and long-term outcomes in the ToC).

## Group activities

The group-based activities and social events were commended by many of the participants we spoke to. Generally, they enjoyed taking part in fun activities such as playing tennis and going to the beach for a picnic as it allowed them to experience life outside their home. Decisions around which group activities would take place were based upon the input of the participants so that there were opportunities for each participant to take part in activities that suited their individual needs and preferences. While they undoubtedly found the activities fun, participants were also able to see the positive influence taking part had on their personal development, more specifically their social skills, confidence, and team-building skills. The following quotes are typical of the way in which participants described their understanding of the purpose behind the group activities.

“I've done rock climbing, boating on a lake, swimming, going to the beach for a picnic, play tennis and football. It's good for team building and for pushing yourself in certain situations.”

**Participant**

“Definitely [enjoyed] swimming and badminton, that's exercise, makes me feel good and it gives me more energy.”

**Participant**

"They arrange activities for you...so if you are socially anxious they get you to do group activities ... and they help build confidence and trust."

**Participant**

## Qualifications and progression

In terms of qualifications and progression, all participants we spoke to emphasised the benefits of the L2 vocational training courses offered to them as they allowed them to build their CV and skills repertoire. Interview preparation was another area many participants found beneficial, as they could receive feedback on their interview style, many for the first time. Some also commented on the specific guidance they received from staff regarding jobs they were applying for. While all completed at least one L2 vocational training course, participant journeys differed here depending on where young people were in the journey. Some were more certain about the job role they wanted to seek and therefore received guidance from staff to help with this. Others were less certain, and so took a broader approach to building core hard skills to make them employment ready.

In addition to CV guidance and interview preparation, participants expressed how valuable the 8-day yacht trip was to their personal development. 19 of the 53 participants took part in the trip. Those

who were interviewed said it was a different, once in a lifetime experience that they enjoyed, where they learnt new information, and developed their confidence too. The second and third quotes below are notable in that they emphasise the tangible benefits that participants felt they gained from the sail, while also speaking to their enjoyment.

“I would say the best thing I did with CatZero was going on the 8 days sail.”

**Participant**

“I went on the 8-day sail and loved it. I previously had agoraphobia. I overcame my fears and received a competency certificate.”

**Participant**

“It [the yacht trip] was a big confidence boost too, it's a once in a lifetime kind of thing.”

**Participant**

### Action Planning - tailored and holistic support

Participants often commented on receiving specific needs-based support, advice, and training. This tended to focus on areas participants believed they specifically needed help with. Examples of specific areas staff helped participants with were effective communication, healthy eating, overcoming a fear of water and learning to swim, and money management.

“[I completed a] communication and people skills course. Now I speak more open-mindedly, look at things in a different way, ask people if I can give advice, and not tell them what to do.”

**Participant**

“They gave me the tools I need to try and cook more and eat more healthily.”

**Participant**

“I was in a spending mind frame, [getting in] more and more debt. CatZero helped me with that and now its sorted.”

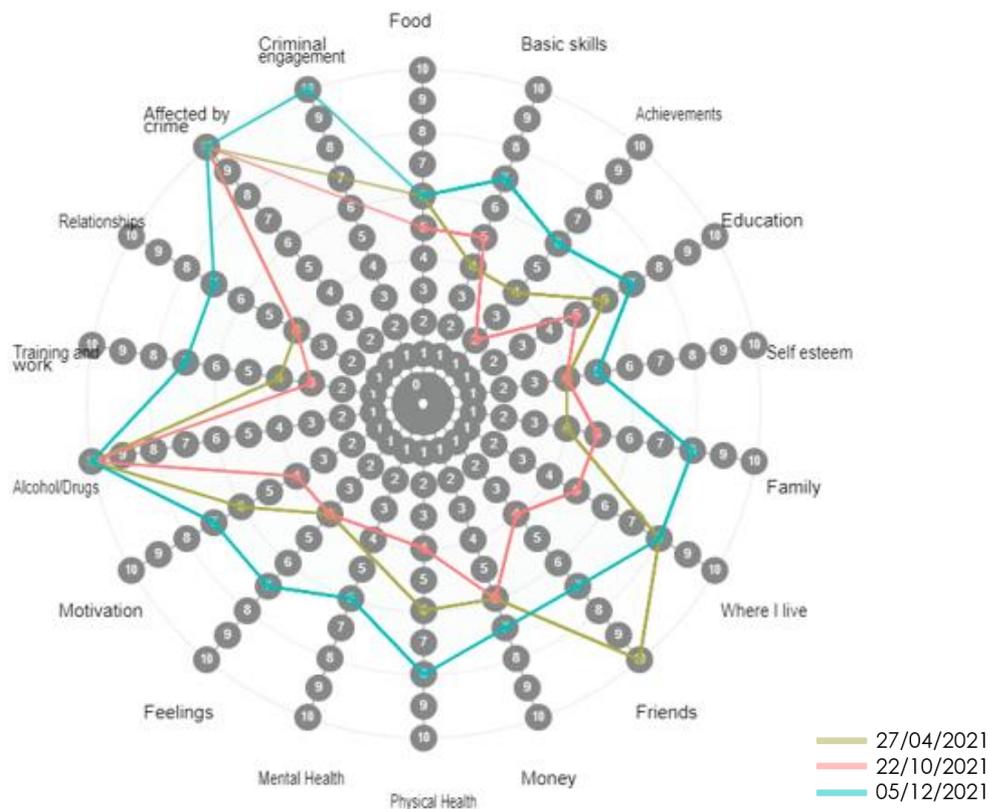
**Participant**

Participants' responses suggest the programme also acted as a journey of self-discovery. Participants regularly reported that they knew they needed help but that when they first engaged with CatZero they were unable to express what needs they had or what support would be most useful. Participants credited the programme with helping them achieve personal growth. Through their participation they were able to identify their needs and develop a greater understanding of

themselves. This understanding allowed for staff to provide more holistic, tailored support and for participants to direct the support they felt they needed. A key element in participants’ personal growth and in delivering tailored and holistic support were the action plans and the meetings to discuss these. It was during the initial meeting and subsequent action planning meetings that issues were discussed, and individualised plans to address these issues and to work towards longer term goals were put in place (example of tasks which might be set in such a plan are ‘to cook a fresh and healthy meal by myself’, ‘to exercise three times this week’, or ‘to establish and stick to a morning routine’). During these sessions, a key tool used by staff to engage participants, identify problems, and track outcomes over time was the ‘wheel’ (or a ‘pie chart’ as the participant in the quote below states) which is a spidergram upon which participants rated themselves on a scale of 1-10 on a range of wellbeing metrics. The use of the wheel is a practical example of how Outcomes Based Accountability influenced the design and delivery of the programme. An anonymised example is shown below which demonstrates how the wheel was used.

“We went through a pie chart about how I was feeling about stuff... that was really helpful ... it helped me realise how to sort stuff out.”

**Participant**



Related to this tailored and holistic approach, participants regularly spoke about the friendliness and approachability of staff. This is something they felt at the outset and which grew throughout the course of the programme. Participants stated that they quickly developed a rapport with staff and as a result felt comfortable discussing their problems with them. It was through developing these relationships that participants were able to reap the most benefits from the programme.

“They just treat you with respect, like an adult really. They understand. They actually get to know you as a person. It's a lot more personal.”

**Participant**

“Really helpful, friendly. I felt like they were people I could go to if I had any problems.”

**Participant**

### Working with a Restorative Practice approach

CatZero staff were all well versed in the theory behind Restorative Practice and incorporated it into each element of programme delivery.

Rather than focusing on participant's NEET status as a problem to be addressed through a prescriptive set of actions, staff work with participants to identify 'root causes' behind their NEET status and to build a programme of support around that.

*“The symptom is that they're not in education, employment, and training (NEET). There may also be anger issues, drink, and drugs, these are symptoms. The cause is pain and trauma.”*

**Staff**

Staff do not force participants to take part in any element of the programme and there are no negative consequences for participants if they do not engage. Rather, CatZero staff try to motivate participants to engage through providing a highly supportive and fun environment and through positive reinforcement. This is an approach that CatZero staff characterised as the opposite to what many of the programme participants will have experienced with other organisations and programmes they have previously taken part in, for example the KickStart scheme.

Another element of Restorative Practice approach that is part of the programme is a focus on relationships and community. This focus was present in the individualised support in that there was often an emphasis on participants restoring and building their significant relationships so that their life outside of the programme would be more fulfilling and stable. It was also present in the group activities which would often include group discussions and team building elements.

The participants we interviewed did not specifically pick up on the use of Restorative Practice and it was not a phrase that was familiar to any of them. However, there was universal agreement among interviewed participants that they felt highly supported by CatZero staff, that they were encouraged to identify and work towards resolving their own personal challenges, and that they felt part of a group with the other programme participants and staff.

## Examples of individual experiences

Below we present some composite participant case studies to illustrate individual experiences of the CatZero programme. Given the small number of CatZero participants, their unique needs, and the personalised nature of the help they have received, in order to preserve their anonymity, we have produced case studies which bring together examples of how the CatZero address different types of needs.

As such, whilst the circumstances, issues, actions, and outcomes referred to below do reflect genuine experiences of individual participants, no one participant experienced the specific combinations of experiences described in the following case studies. These composite case studies should therefore only be read as illustrative examples of the type of experience that a participant on the programme had.

### Hailey, aged 19, from Hull – Feeling isolated and lacking in routine

When Hailey first encountered CatZero, she was socially isolated following a period of severe illness due to her mental health several years ago. She had lost contact with her friends and struggled to leave the house on her own. She also rarely spoke to her family, with only some sporadic contact with her mother. Hailey had been unemployed and claiming Universal Credit for more than a year, although she had some previous work experience in a factory.

After joining the CatZero programme, Hailey completed a multi needs assessment which allowed her to recognise what she needed from the programme, as well as areas of her life she wanted to improve. The result of this assessment led her to decide she wanted to focus on positively changing two key areas of her life, and set the following goals:

1. To get out of her house more often.

Having lost touch with her friends and experiencing ongoing effects of social anxiety, Hailey rarely ever did any activities outside of her home. As someone who had previously enjoyed being around people prior to her illness, she recognised this as contributing both to her current dissatisfaction with life, and as a barrier to finding work.

2. To phase back into work.

Hailey had struggled with her self-esteem but wanted to return to employment. When starting with CatZero, however, she had no stable routine in her life and lacked the confidence, resilience and determination needed to apply for jobs.

Hailey engaged actively with the CatZero programme, particularly the 1:1 sessions with staff, during which she set regular small goals to help move her closer to her overall aims. To prepare herself for

employment, she started planning her days to set a schedule, factoring in routine tasks, such as cleaning and housework, and preparing meals. She also benefited from having a regular diary of activities with CatZero, on top of the 1:1 sessions, such as training to achieve qualifications such as First Aid and Health and Safety certificates, and leisure activities.

Adhering to a planned daily routine, which created more structure to her days, helped Hailey feel more ready for the commitment of employment. In terms of finding work, CatZero helped Hailey with her CV and emailed her opportunities she may be interested in. They liaised on her behalf with employers and recruitment agencies. At one stage, Hailey was close to securing employment having successfully attended a job interview, but then stopped reply to contact from the recruitment agency. As CatZero had been supporting Hailey through the process, when she stopped engaging, her recruiter was able to follow-up with CatZero staff about this, and during her next scheduled 1:1, the CatZero team provided her with the emotional support and reassurance she needed to overcome anxiety about starting work and continue with the recruitment process.

Hailey was one of CatZero's longer term attendees, and participated in activities for more than 6 months. She felt her time on the programme was vital to improving her self-confidence and personal motivation, which she rated as increasing from scores of 3/10 and 2/10 respectively on enrolment, to 9/10 on leaving the programme. Following the programme, her goal for the immediate future is to stay in employment and maintain the new routine she has developed.

### Alex, aged 18, from Hull – Experiencing anxiety and uncertainty about his career prospects

Alex was referred to the YFF-funded programme from the Full Families programme, which he was part of with his mum and two siblings. Alex was struggling with anxiety and low self-esteem for some time. He was bullied at school which he struggled with during the last few years of school, exacerbating his anxiety. He can find himself overwhelmed by his own emotions, and will become very closed off under these circumstances. His diet is unhealthy as he eats a lot of fast food and sometimes skips meals. He's also not particularly active as he spends a lot of time at home. He would like to be in work, but doesn't know what type of career would interest him, and because of his low confidence, doesn't feel like he has any particular strengths to offer an employer and has concerns about the responsibility of full time work. Alex was nervous about starting on CatZero because of the social aspects of the

programme, but wanted help to find more of a sense of purpose in his life. After his multi needs assessment, with the help of CatZero Alex decided to focus on improving the following three aspects of his life:

1. Reduce his level of anxiety

When Alex joined the programme, he was often preoccupied with anxious thoughts. With CatZero, he agreed a plan to reduce the impact of his anxiety by taking steps such as talking through his feelings with someone, keeping himself busy and using breathing techniques where necessary.

2. Obtain some additional qualifications and work experience

To help Alex work out what type of job he may want in the future, he set an objective to gain more work-related skills and exposure to workplaces. Alex agreed to work with the CatZero progressions team to make the most of any opportunities they could offer to him.

3. Live a healthier lifestyle through improved diet and increased exercise

Alex planned to work on achieving this goal through incremental steps, starting with eating fibre bars for breakfast so that he stopped skipping meals, and working his way up to having the ability to cook full meals from scratch. To improve his exercise, he agreed to start keeping an activity diary, so that he could become more aware of opportunities to fit more exercise into his life and download a fitness app with ideas for quick and free workouts.

Although Alex had set the above goals for himself, initially his anxiety and low-esteem proved to be barriers to getting fully involved with CatZero. In his first month or so on the programme, staff found him very reticent and lacking in enthusiasm for activities, although he did attend 1:1 and employability sessions. When the opportunity for work experience at Sewells, a local employer, came up, Alex seemed reluctant, but with the staff, completed the necessary paperwork to take part anyway. Over the next month when Alex met with CatZero staff they discussed the role and it became clear that whilst he was interested, he was worried about whether he would be capable.

With coaching from CatZero, Alex did manage to complete a period of four weeks' work experience at Sewells. CatZero staff remarked that this was "a giant step for [Alex], as it really pushed him outside of his comfort zone". He also received positive feedback from Sewells themselves, which acted as a great boost to his self-esteem. After the experience at Sewells, Alex became much more willing to try other new things with the support of CatZero. He took a number of the Level 2 qualifications that CatZero offered and participated in sailing-related activities, despite thinking at the start of the programme that he might not be capable.

Alex found that getting into the habit of doing more regular exercise helped with his anxiety also. He had previously discussed treatment options with his GP, and did not want to take medication as he was feeling better, but he felt conscious of needing to remain aware of looking after his mental health through other means.

Alex worked on improving his CV, with CatZero staff helping him to add details of the new qualifications and experience he had gained whilst on the programme, and he started to apply for jobs related to the role he had undertaken at Sewells. Not long after this however, Alex dropped out of contact with CatZero for a few weeks, finding the lack of response to job applications difficult to deal with, and knocking his confidence. CatZero persisted and after a number of attempts through different methods (email, text message, phone calls), did manage to get in touch with Alex again. The progressions staff encouraged Alex to explore further education opportunities, in addition to employment, including vocational courses at the local college and apprenticeships.

Alex has shown interest in completing an engineering apprenticeship and was continuing to look at the options available to him towards the end of the CatZero programme. Via a recruitment agency, he had managed to find a contract for some casual work in the interim, which he said wasn't "his dream job", but he was happy to be getting to know his new colleagues and planned to use his income to help pay for driving lessons. Alex remains in contact with CatZero, receiving regular information on job and training opportunities from the progressions team.

# Staff reflections on the delivery of the programme and suggested refinements

When reflecting retrospectively on the delivery of the programme, staff expressed the following views on Covid, and the design and length of the programme:

1. Covid presented significant and unavoidable challenges which meant parts of the programme could not be delivered as originally intended. As set out above, programme content had to be adapted largely due to the impact of Covid which resulted in attendance levels and qualifications gained not reaching the targets set. To counteract the impact, staff were resourceful and flexible in making alternative plans to deliver the programme. Staff were confident that they did as much as they possibly could to provide support and that participants still benefitted a great deal from the adapted programme. This is a reflection shared by the participants who took part in interviews.
2. The design presented logistical challenges due to the geographical area and the age range of participants. A larger team with staff dedicated to individual age groups and locations would have meant staff were less 'stretched'. It was noted by staff that the design was built around their understanding of the YFF grant requirements. Ordinarily they would not have designed a programme that presented such logistical challenges and they would have preferred to focus delivery within a smaller area and with a more homogenous group of participants.
3. A 12-month programme is desirable in order to achieve long-term positive outcomes for the participants. This allows the participant and CatZero sufficient time to understand and address underlying issues that contributed to their NEET status. For example, to tackle the underlying causes of a problem such as drug or alcohol abuse which, sustained support is required and trust needs to be built over time between the young person and programme staff. However, one drawback of the longer programme was that it lacked the intensity of engagement and sense of 'camaraderie' that CatZero staff felt they were able to foster within their usual 12-week programme. This was further compounded by Covid laws and guidelines as opportunities for indoor and face-to-face meetings were limited. Staff reflected

that they would have ideally had more opportunities to foster a positive group dynamic amongst participants. In the context of Covid, it is difficult to gauge the full potential impact of CatZero's use of a Restorative Practice approach to providing support through a programme that was lower intensity and longer than what they would normally provide.

## Evidence of promise

This section considers the extent to which the early evidence on participant outcomes suggests that this programme is a plausible and promising way to support young people into EET. It begins by describing the available evidence and scope of reporting against outcomes; it then sets out the evidence for outcomes thematically by looking at work readiness and personal growth metrics; the chapter then looks at the possible added impact of participation on the sailing challenge, and the possible added impact of participation on the Full Families programme alongside the YFF-funded programme; the chapter concludes with an early assessment of EET outcomes for programme participants.

### Scope of evidence available

The CatZero programme aimed to have an impact on and improve not only young people's direct employability skills, but also their attitudes, behaviours, self-worth, confidence, and overall understanding of the local employment market. The Theory of Change sets out the expected timeframe for outcomes to be achieved. These are:

1. Short-term – expected to be achieved within six months from an individual starting the programme
2. Mid-term – expected to be achieved within six months from an individual completing the programme
3. Long-term – expected to be achieved within two years of an individual completing the programme

Upon recruitment, CatZero collected and recorded MI data on the participants – this consisted of categorical information such as:

- Basic demographic and personal details;
- Information on NEET risk factors such as whether they had ever been homeless, been in care, have a criminal record or have been a victim of crime;
- Programme details including which group they are part of, the dates they started and completed the programme
- Progression information including EET destinations

In addition to the information above, CatZero recorded programme engagement and progression towards outcomes. This included:

- Number and description of activities attended
- Number of action planning sessions attended
- Questionnaire scores on a wide range of personal efficacy metrics e.g. ‘confidence’ and ‘problem solving’. Scores for 37 participants in the over 18 groups were recorded at the outset of their participation and 21 of those participants also recorded their scores on the same metrics upon exiting the programme (i.e., pre-to-post programme participation). None of the under 18s recorded scores upon exiting the programme.
- Number and description of qualifications gained

The data collected by CatZero was not limited to the description above, but these are the broad data fields of most relevance to this evaluation.

Following the conclusion of the programme in December 2021, this data was collated by CatZero and made available to IFF Research. The evidence and analysis presented in this chapter addresses the short term-outcomes of the ToC. At the time of drafting, not enough time has elapsed to assess the mid-term and long-term outcomes included in the ToC.

It was during the action planning sessions that CatZero would ask the questions and record progression towards short-term outcomes. As set out in the previous chapter, the under 18 age group did not engage in the action planning sessions in the way initially intended. This was due to logistical challenges related to their school commitments as well as the appropriateness of holding such sessions with participants of this age. Because of this, there is no pre-to-post short-term outcomes data available for the under 18s, meaning that all of the numeric data presented in the ‘work readiness’ and ‘personal growth’ sections of this chapter relate to the over 18s. Also, as the majority of participants who took part in the Full Families programme were in the under 18 group, there is no quantitative analysis of the impact of combined participation in the YFF-funded programme and Full Families programme in this report.

In addition to the quantitative MI data, the evidence towards the achievement of short-term outcomes includes qualitative data gathered from participants, CatZero staff and from representatives of CatZero’s partner organisations.

The short-term outcomes are split into two categories. Firstly, those which are directly EET related, such as increased work readiness (i.e., skills, aptitudes, and attitudes employers expect job seekers

to have), understanding of local job market, knowledge of how to write a CV and cover letter, improved interviewing skills, improved social skills, problem solving skills and a better sense of direction. Secondly, the personal growth outcomes which are more closely associated with the use of Restorative Practice, these include increased confidence and resilience, improved wellbeing and emotional regulation, greater social support, and increased agency and personal responsibility.

Although EET outcomes are not part of the short-term outcomes in the ToC, the MI data provided to IFF Research does include EET destinations for the participants, so an early assessment on EET outcomes has been included as part of the evidence presented in this report.

When considering the quantitative data presented below, it is important to note three caveats.

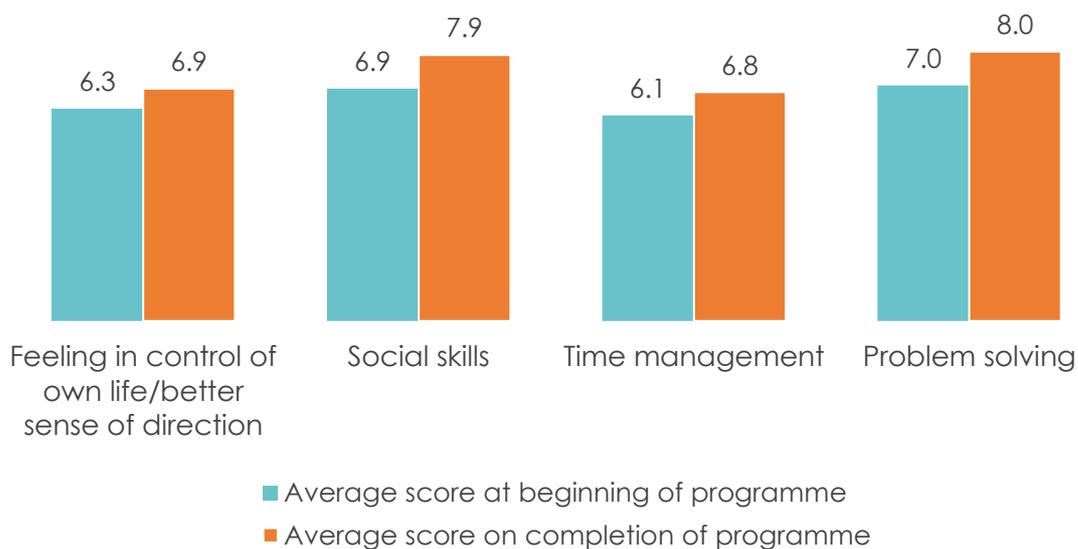
- Firstly, this data only refers to the 53 participants who were counted as completing the programme or who attended until it's conclusion. This is a very small number to conduct quantitative analysis on and is therefore not a robust basis on which causality can be attributed. Further, this means that the findings should be read as directional, and, if comparisons were to be made with other similar programmes, they should be treated cautiously.
- Secondly, as discussed elsewhere in the report, the eight "early leavers" are omitted from the analysis, meaning that there may be a bias towards participants who are more likely to have had positive experiences of the programme.
- Thirdly, this data represents two points in time and does not account for any fluctuation that may have occurred during the programme. Tracking fluctuations on average scores was not possible due to the rolling nature of programme recruitment and individualised timings of action planning sessions.

### Work readiness outcomes

During action planning sessions, participants rated themselves on a 10-point scale on various metrics throughout the programme. The four 'work readiness' metrics were 'feeling in control of own life/better sense of direction', 'social skills', 'time management', and 'problem solving'. While these can be seen to be directly EET related in that they are skills and attitudes that employers and educational organisations value, they can also be considered as metrics against which to measure the impact of working within a Restorative Practice environment (due to the focus on building relationships and resolving conflict). As shown in Figure 4, when comparing the average score across participants at the start of the programme with the average score across participants upon exiting

the programme, the average scores for each of the work readiness metrics increased<sup>11</sup>. The biggest improvements were for ‘social skills’ which saw the average increase by 1.0 and ‘problem solving’ which also increased by 1.0. The increase in average score for ‘feeling in control of own life/better sense of direction’ and ‘time management’ were slightly lower at 0.6 and 0.7 respectively (as covered in the next section, the average increases for these metrics are smaller in comparison to the average increases for the personal growth metrics). When only looking at the 21 participants who recorded scores both at the beginning of the programme and at the end of the programme, the average increases are slightly greater as they had a lower average starting point for each of the metrics.

**Figure 4: Average scores for work readiness metrics**



Beginning of programme, n=37; Completion of programme, n=21

As well as helping participants to build these general skills, CatZero offered job market guidance, assistance in drafting CVs, and interview practice. During the qualitative interviews, participants who had since found employment or were in the process of applying to jobs regularly cited the influence of CatZero in helping them to find a job and in building their confidence in their ability to secure the job. They were particularly praiseworthy of CatZero’s assistance in drafting their CV and interview training, both of which were areas that participants previously had little to no experience in. The quotes below are typical of how participants viewed the quality and impact of the CV assistance and interview training in helping them find a job.

---

“I found the job on my own, but it wasn’t what I was looking for. I brought it up with CatZero, they opened my eyes as to why I should apply, I put my CV forward and the same day I got my interview sorted and I’ve been working there since October. They complimented my CV many times during the interview.”

**Participant**

“They didn’t tell me how to find the job and assist with the actual job, but doing the interview skills and building confidence through the activities here ... they built my abilities to do the job. They helped in a general sense to get the job. It probably was a big influence to help me with the interview and to be prepared.”

**Participant**

“I think I would have been able to find a job [to apply to] but would not have been able to go through the interview process [without CatZero’s support].”

**Participant**

The qualifications that participants gained through taking part in the programme helped to build confidence in their ability to find employment. Firstly, because they were learning skills which could be applied in a workplace, and they were able to gain some experience of a workplace/formal environment by completing the qualifications. Secondly, because it helped them to build their CVs and to present a more professional image to potential employers. And thirdly, the sense of achievement increased their confidence.

“They helped me build an amazing CV with loads of qualifications.”

**Participant**

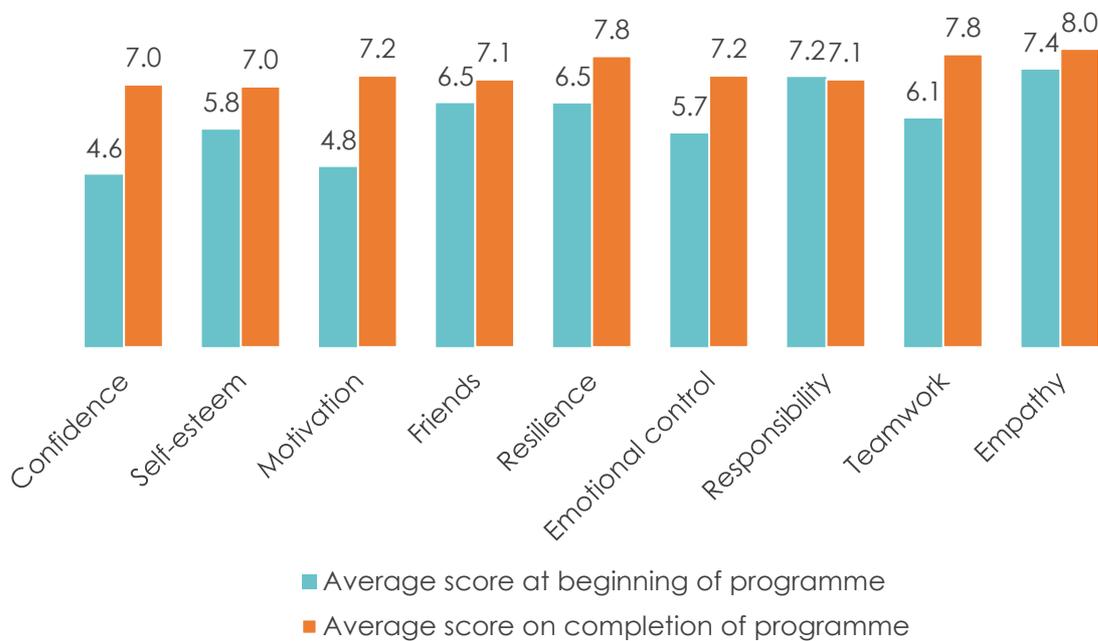
### Personal growth outcomes

The nine metrics that CatZero collected relating to personal growth were ‘confidence’, ‘self-esteem’, ‘motivation’, ‘I have a good support network (friends)’, ‘When things go wrong, I now keep trying (resilience)’, ‘When I get angry with someone I can keep calm (emotional control)’, ‘I will do tasks even if I don’t enjoy them (responsibility)’, ‘I enjoy working with other people (teamwork)’, and ‘I try to understand how other people think and feel (empathy)’. Several of these relate specifically to the types of short-term outcomes that CatZero deliver through the use of Restorative Practice and which they ultimately believe can lead to EET outcomes in the mid to long term.

The evidence from the MI data clearly shows that the programme had a large positive impact upon participant’s personal growth. As shown in Figure 5, on eight of the nine metrics, the average scores

across participants increased from beginning the programme to completion of the programme. The only metric where no increase occurred was for ‘responsibility’ which decreased by 0.1. The increases in average scores are notably higher for the personal growth metrics than they are for the work readiness metrics. The largest average increases being for ‘confidence’ and ‘motivation’ which both increased by 2.4. These average score increases show that, by the time they exited the programme, many participants were feeling more positive, optimistic and better equipped to deal with challenges. As with the work readiness metrics, when only looking at the 21 participants who recorded scores both at the beginning and end of the programme, the average increases are slightly greater as they had a lower average starting point for each of the metrics.

**Figure 5: Average scores for personal growth metrics**



Beginning of programme, n=37; Completion of programme, n=21

During the qualitative interviews, all the participants spoke very positively of the changes they had recognised within themselves and credited this to the support they received from CatZero. Specifically, they understood the value in the group activities in helping them to develop soft skills and increasing their confidence. This was important to them in accessing EET but also for their general wellbeing.

“The activities bring out a side that people normally keep inside. I feel like that’s what happened to me. It’s not just all about work, there are other sides to life.”

**Participant**

“A lot of people who go on CatZero don’t leave the house a lot and don’t have the best social skills or social surroundings so it helps with that I think.”

**Participant**

As mentioned in the previous chapter, participants often found that the programme helped them on a journey of self-discovery. The action planning sessions were a key part of this as it was during these sessions that they were able to explore ideas and set out actions to work towards objectives which previously would never have considered. For staff, this personal growth and ‘soft’ outcomes are plain to see and are typical among those they support. A common sentiment among staff was that contributing to the participants personal growth was just as, if not more, rewarding to them as EET outcomes.

“Lots of examples [of positive outcomes], obvious outcomes are getting a job or attending school but soft outcomes are the best – seeing someone super anxious or crying in the first meeting, by the end of it seeing their self-worth and belief. It is a massive thing.”

**Staff**

When considering the significant challenges that participants faced in accessing and sustaining EET at the outset of the programme (as outlined in the participants Needs Profile), particularly in relation to mental health conditions, social anxiety and lack of motivation, the improvements evidenced in this section provide a very positive reflection on the impact of the programme and on their future prospects.

### Impact of participation in sailing trip upon work readiness and personal growth outcomes

Of the 19 participants who took part in the sailing trip, eight were over the age of 18 and recorded metric scores. When comparing the outcomes of these participants with those who did not take part in the sail, as shown in Figure 6, we see even greater increases in the average metric scores from beginning to completing the programme among the sailing challenge participants. However, these results need to be treated with caution due to the very low base sizes which mean that comparisons cannot be considered robust.

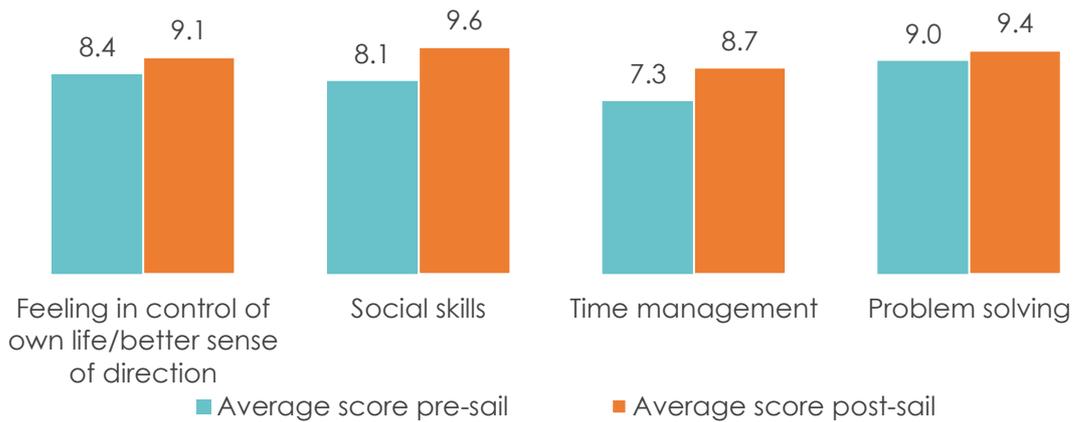
**Figure 6: Comparison of pre-post programme improvements between sailing trip participants and the rest of the programme participants**

Outcomes	Participants who took part in sailing trip (n=8)	Participants who did not take part in sailing trip (n=29)
<b>Work readiness – improvements in average score from beginning to end of programme</b>		
Feeling in control of own life/better sense of direction	1.0	0.2
Social skills	+1.6	+0.8
Time management	+2.2	+0.3
Problem solving	+2.7	+0.4
<b>Personal growth – improvements in average score from beginning to end of programme</b>		
Confidence	+3.7	+1.8
Self-esteem	+3.2	+0.5
Motivation	+3.5	+2.0
Friends	+2.3	+0.1
Resilience	+2.2	+0.9
Emotional control	+3.7	+0.9
Responsibility	+2.1	-0.9
Teamwork	+3.1	+1.3
Empathy	+1.9	0.0

It is not clear from these figures alone whether these improvements are the result of taking part in the sailing challenge or if participation in the sailing challenge is made more likely by marked improvements across these metrics prior to the sail (i.e., results could be skewed due to selection bias). Programme staff made assessments on whether an individual was ‘sail ready’ before they embarked on the sailing trip – this was based on a variety of factors including their physical capability to take part, their sailing competence based on previous sailing activities, and their personal willingness and confidence.

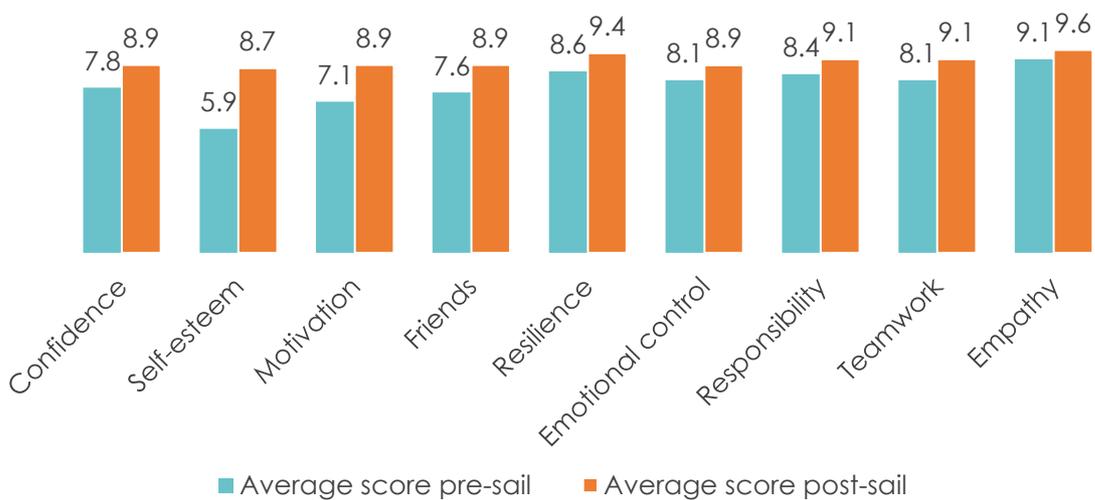
As set out in Figure 7 and 8, we can also see the immediate impact of the sailing trip as some of the participants (7/19) who took part in the sail also completed a questionnaire immediately prior to the sail and immediately after the sail. Starting from relatively high base scores, this also shows large positive improvements across the full range of metrics. In particular, the self-esteem of participants who took part in the sailing trip increased greatly, as did motivation.

**Figure 7: Sailing trip work readiness outcomes**



Base size = 7

**Figure 8: Sailing trip personal growth outcomes**



Base size = 7

The qualitative evidence also suggests that the sailing trip had a positive impact, with staff and participants in agreement as to the outcomes which occurred as a result. This is particularly in relation to how the participants outlook on life and motivation evolved as they became aware of what they are capable of.

“[We’re] not trying to make them sailors, [it’s about] giving them life experience.  
For anyone who goes sailing when you come back you’re gonna see the world  
through different lenses”

**Staff**

“I wanted to be on the course to overcome my fears ... I overcame my fears on the  
boat”

**Participant**

“It was a big confidence boost too, it’s a once in a life-time kind of thing”

**Participant**

As well as a change in outlook, motivation, and confidence the participants also learned transferrable practical skills that can be applied to the workplace such as applying numerical skills to tasks, problem solving and communicating effectively with colleagues.

“A lot of the participants have low literacy and numeracy skills, suddenly [their] role [on the yacht] involves looking at numbers, which is overwhelming at first, looking at position, wind strength, barometer, log reading, how far you travel. This requires basic maths, they try several times, some may use calculator but they’re learning, taking responsibility. Before finishing, some ask what course they’re steering, looking up at the sky to look at cloud oktas.”

**Staff**

As with all elements of the programme, a Restorative Practice approach was applied to the sailing trip. Specifically, this involved daily group discussions which were identified as a key aspect in helping participants to become more confident, improve their teamworking skills and become more empathetic. A staff member who took part in the sail pointed to an example of a practical joke that upset one of the other crew members and how the use of Restorative Practice helped the participant concerned to become more empathetic and take responsibility.

“As part of Restorative Practice we go round the group and address any issues, solutions come from group decision, [I] asked the lad what he was doing and how

he thinks his action was affecting others, he nonchalantly said it was a funny joke and he didn't think it affected anyone ... [through discussion they reach a conclusion] ... it was a pivotal moment, the lads realised for the first time how their actions affects others, a turning point for them and the voyage."

Staff

### Impact of combined participation with Full Families programme

While the report does not include any quantitative data to assess the impact of combined participation on the YFF-funded programme and Full Families programme, evidence from the qualitative interviews does suggest that it had a positive impact towards achieving outcomes including improved school attendance and personal efficacy. The relationships within the family and the positive examples that are set by parents and children help to improve the outcomes of the individual participant and of the whole family. A staff member who works on the Full Families programme described the progress made by members of a family unit as a mutually beneficial and reinforcing dynamic:

“[Speaking from parent’s point of view] If my kids can do all this, what can I do, I can push myself.’ For example we had a dad who got a job and the kids were so proud.”

Staff

### EET outcomes

Of the 53 young people who completed the programme, 20 participants had moved into employment by the time the MI data was shared with IFF, shortly after the end of the programme, of which 14 had sustained at least eight weeks of employment. Another seven participants moved on into further education or training by the end of the programme.

**Figure 9: Number of participants who progressed to EET**

Outcomes	Hull 18+ (n=19)	Grimsby 18+ (n=20)	Under 18 (n=14)	Total (n=53)
Progressed to further education / training	2	4	1	7
Progressed to employment	12	6	2	20
<b>Number who have progressed to EET</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>27</b>

This data shows that, overall, just over half of the participants (27/53) had progressed to an EET outcome shortly after completing the programme. For the over 18s, the number of participants who

had progressed to an EET outcome was 24 (/39) while for under 18s the number who had progressed this figure was proportionally lower with three participants (/14) recorded as moving on to EET outcomes.

When considering the EET outcomes for the under 18s, it is important to note that expected outcomes in the ToC were to improve school attendance in the short and medium-term, which was not recorded in the MI data, and to eventually move on to appropriate further education, training, or employment. At the time the monitoring data was collected and shared, the academic year was still in progress. This means that most in the under 18 group simply had not had the opportunity to move beyond their current situation and were therefore not counted as having progressed towards EET.

Quantitative data about whether the intended education-related outcomes (e.g., better attendance) were achieved for the under 18 group was not available. However qualitative feedback from a teacher interviewed for the evaluation and from CatZero staff was that school attendance and engagement improved as a result of taking part in the programme.

### Evidence of Promise - conclusion

CatZero's YFF-funded programme was a small-scale development project driven by a depth study of the intervention. An assessment of impact evaluation feasibility was not part of the work conducted for this evaluation, and as such, no conclusions have been drawn on this.

The small number of participants, lack of long-term or control group data, and significant adaptations that had to be made to the programme due to Covid mean that any conclusions as to whether this is a promising and plausible programme to help young people access EET opportunities need to be treated with caution. However, the evidence of progress towards the short-term outcomes and to early EET outcomes presented in this chapter does show that the programme is promising and plausible. The evidence also shows that there is potentially an added benefit to taking part in the sailing trip and to also taking part in the Full Families programme.

When considering these positive early outcomes, in tandem with the participants Needs Profile, the evidence would suggest that the type of support CatZero provide – which is holistic, rooted in Restorative Practice, and not solely related to EET outcomes – works particularly well for young people who are far from the labour market due to significant personal challenges, and who may not be able to benefit from different types of programmes.

# Readiness for further evaluation

The data presented in this report shows a positive view of the short-term impact of CatZero's YFF-funded programme at an overall level. However, from an evaluation point of view, the nature of CatZero's model (which is based on a Restorative Practice approach and places a strong emphasis on holistic and tailored support to participants) makes it difficult to attribute which specific elements of the programme are most effective in achieving the outcomes set out in the Theories of Change.

Each participant's journey through the programme was unique. They each started from different points in relation to their distance from EET and they had a diverse range of problems to work through. Depending on their specific circumstances and ambitions, participant's objectives covered a wide array of outcomes ranging from building social networks, to re-engaging with education, to very specific employment goals. Participants therefore required and were provided with different forms of support and they work towards personalised goals. The differences between participants' journeys were amplified further by the range of ages, as a 15-year-old will naturally have a very different set of needs and objectives in comparison to a 21-year-old. In this context, it is not possible to quantitatively assess the impact of dosage or specific activities and qualifications in driving positive outcomes. Simply put, this is because there is no 'typical' CatZero participant or journey on which to base an evaluation.

The use of Restorative Practice in delivering support is a complicating factor for this evaluation. As a foundational principle for how CatZero approach their work and as a driver of change, it is important that the extent to which it was delivered and had an impact is assessed. However, the difficulty lies in isolating this element of programme delivery as it is not straightforward to identify or measure in a meaningful way.

A further complicating factor for this evaluation was that the programme lasted for 12 months but participants did not need to attend for 12 months to be considered to have completed the programme. This was because participants were recruited on a rolling basis so it was common to

join the programme partway through the year, and also because participants who left the programme early because they had progressed to EET were counted as completing the programme. These participants spent less time overall on the programme and generally participated in fewer activities and action planning sessions. To assess the impact of dosage in such a context is difficult because the data showed that those who had completed fewer elements of the programme often had the most positive EET outcomes.

## Scope for future evaluation

For the programme to be considered scalable for future impact evaluation, it would need to be delivered in a more consistent way for all participants. Ideally this would mean participants remain on the programme for the full duration of the programme and receive similar levels of support. This might be easier to achieve if:

- The programme length were the more standard CatZero 12 week programme
- Participants were limited to those aged over 18
- There was an alternative adventure challenge available to those not able to participate in the sailing trip.

Even with this adjustment, the holistic and individualised nature of the support might make it difficult to isolate the critical driver(s) of change which in turn could make it challenging for YFF to obtain transferable learning from such an evaluation.

To meet YFF objectives, the programme might also need personal goals to be more clearly and consistently defined towards EET outcomes.

However, it is important to state that such an approach would represent a departure from CatZero's foundational principles and their ability to provide highly individualised support.

For an impact evaluation to assess long-term outcomes, a process would need to be put in place whereby CatZero maintains contact with participants over a period of two years. Part of this process should include 'post-completion' surveys after certain time milestones have passed (e.g., 6 months, 12 months, 24 months) which cover the key metrics analysed for this evaluation and EET status. Alternatively, they would need to record sufficient data about their young people to enable them to be identified within administrative datasets.

## Data collection

The current monitoring and outcomes data captures a vast majority of what is needed in order to demonstrate the distance travelled by the young people in their development over the course of the programme. However, the method of collection – recording attendance and progression on paper before collating and inputting into an Excel spreadsheet – led to some formatting inconsistencies (e.g., free-text used instead of standardised categories, formatting of dates etc.) and incomplete data (e.g., fields left blank).

In early 2022, CatZero transitioned from the method described above, to using a new data collection and storage platform called Lamplight which will greatly reduce the likelihood of inconsistent and incomplete data. By collecting data into a single place, it should also be easier to maintain up to date contact details and keep in touch with participants over a sustained period in order to assess long-term impacts of their support and to re-engage participants if necessary.

# Policy and practice findings

Some of the key learnings that emerge from this research are that:

- It is difficult to create a single EET programme that works well across the whole 14-24 age group. CatZero attempted to fit a programme that had historically worked well for 18-24 year olds to the 14-18 group (with some adaptations). This has not been particularly successful for younger participants who seemed to question the relevance of some elements (particularly the more work-focussed ones) and generally have not engaged very well. The challenges of fitting delivery around school commitments also need to be carefully thought through.
- There appears to be promise in the use of multi-needs assessments, establishment of goals, outcome-based accountability approach of tracking small steps towards each goal in helping young people who are some distance from the labour market.
- There is an evidence base for the use of Restorative Practice as an effective approach to supporting young people to achieve positive outcomes, with the most robust evidence for its impact in a school setting (see literature review). This research on the CatZero programme provides evidence, albeit early and on a small scale, that Restorative Practice can also be effective in achieving positive EET outcomes for young people, and is potentially more effective than other approaches for those with complex problems who are far from the labour market.
- Creating a fun and highly supportive programme is more likely to engage young people with complex problems who have previously not benefitted from other forms of support. This is particularly the case when compared to programmes which are highly prescriptive and characterised as 'done to' the participant.
- For a holistic programme of this nature, a 12-month delivery period leads to very different levels of activity between participants (which in turn leads to challenges for evaluation).

# Conclusions

This study was funded under the Development Grants Funding Stream so the evaluation activity has been designed to see how well the programme works (based on a small-scale programme) and if there might be potential for conducting a more robust evaluation of it in the future.

YFF-funded programme reached the intended number of young people. However only around half 'completed' the programme (in terms of attending the intended number of sessions or leaving to enter education, employment, or training). The completion rate looks a lot more positive when just those aged 18+ are considered (particularly when the length of delivery and the challenges of delivery during the pandemic are taken into account).

The key strengths of the CatZero programme are:

- It is grounded in a firm evidence base – there is good evidence for the benefits of the use of Restorative Practice, the use of outcomes-based accountability and the use of an adventure challenge.
- It has worked with a range of young people with quite complex needs who might not be able to benefit from other types of support available.
- Young people seem to have enjoyed their experience and were able to identify positive improvements to their lives as a consequence of taking part.
- The expected proportion of young people took part in the sailing challenge at the end of the programme.
- Data collection is firmly embedded in the programme (even if for the YFF-funded cohorts the format limited its potential for analysis).

One key component of the delivery of the YFF-funded programme that it has not been possible to draw a definitive conclusion on is the benefit of working with young people over a 12-month period (rather than the 12-week cohort-based approach that CatZero usually use). There seemed to be benefits – in terms of avoiding young people having a long wait before the start of the next programme – but also drawbacks in terms of losing some of the intensity of a shorter programme.

In terms of aspects that did not work so well, there were clearly challenges with incorporating the younger age group (those under 18) into the programme which is evidenced in their much lower completion rates. This was a challenge that CatZero were alive to from the outset – they previously

had run this programme with just over 18s but understood that YFF wanted funded programmes to work with a wider age range.

Although efforts were made to structure activities around school terms, this meant that the younger age group did not experience the same regularity of contact with CatZero that was available to the older participants. In place of employment outcomes, the immediate outcomes for this group were intended to be better attendance at school but there was not a structured process in place for collecting this information. The young people themselves were difficult to retain contact with – in itself meaning that there is little evidence from them to be used in the evaluation.

The other element that was perhaps less successful was the delivery of Work Trials or other contact with employers. This is something CatZero have been able to deliver for other cohorts in the past, so this challenge is likely to be purely Covid-related.

# Appendix A – Programme completion data

## Overall completion of programme

**Figure 10: Number of participants who ‘completed’ the programme**

	Attended 6 or more action planning sessions <i>and</i> 10 or more group activities	Progressed to EET before the end of the programme (i.e., ‘early completers’)	Number of participants in group
Hull Over 18s	7	6	19
Grimsby Over 18s	10	5	20
Under 18s	0	0	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>53</b>

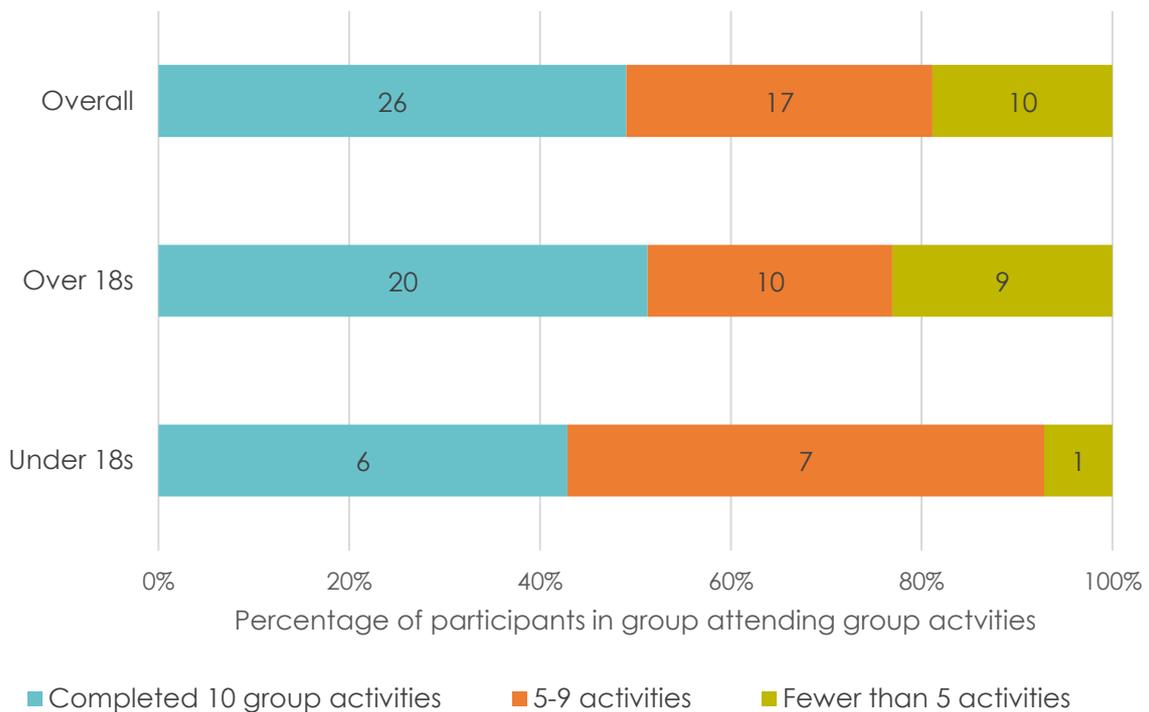
## Group activities

Participants were supposed to take part in a minimum of 10 activities each. The types of activities varied a great deal. For example, they included beach days, hikes, badminton, swimming, and cooking lessons to name a few. The activities were organised based on what the participants indicated they were most interested in or what it was felt would be most beneficial. Of the 53 who were counted as having completed the full programme:

- 26 completed 10 or more activities
- 17 completed between 5 and 9 activities
- 10 completed fewer than 5 activities

When splitting these results by age category, the corresponding figures for the 39 participants in the over 18 groups: 20, 10 and 9 for the 39 participants in the over 18 groups; and for the 14 participants in the under 18 group the corresponding figures are: 6, 7 and 1.

**Figure 11: Participation in group activities (including 'early completers')**



Overall n=53; Over 18s n=39; Under 18s n=14

The average number of group activities attended by the over 18s was 12.8, for the under 18s the average number of group activities attended was lower at 9.8.

One of the main reasons that participants did not attend 10 sessions as intended was because they had progressed to EET and therefore completed the programme early, before they had the opportunity to take part in more activities. Of the 10 who completed fewer than five activities, five had completed the programme early to start a new job (as all of the early leavers were over 18, this accounts for the relatively high proportion of over 18s who completed fewer than five activities); and of the 17 who completed between five and nine activities, five completed the programme early to start a new job.

### Action Planning

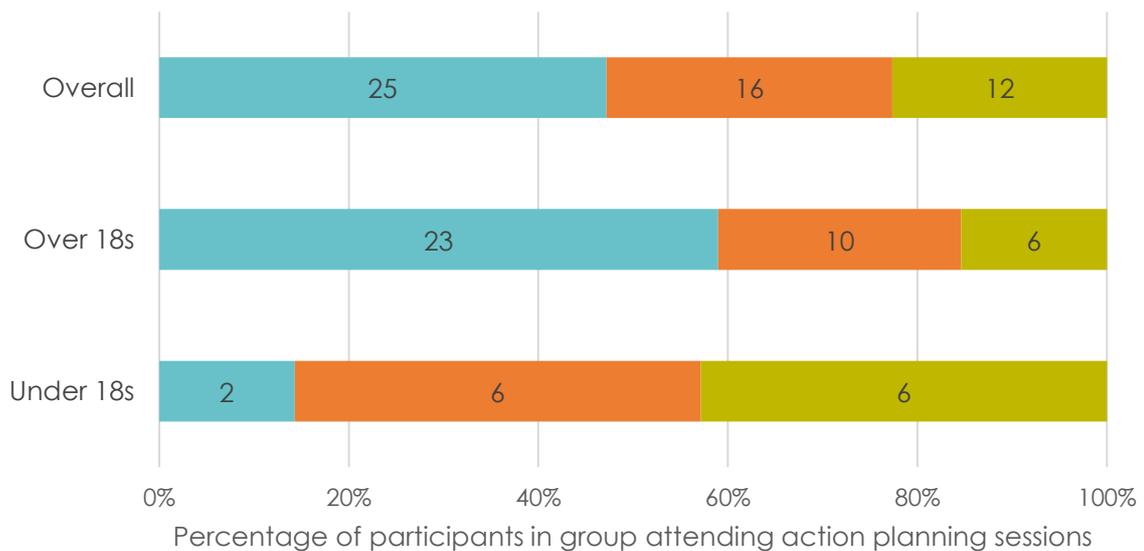
Participant were supposed to attend a minimum of 6 action planning sessions during which they would discuss progress and set new actions to work towards their objectives. Of the 53 who were counted as having completed the full programme:

- 25 attended 6 or more action planning meetings

- 16 attended between 3 and 5 action planning meetings
- 12 attended fewer than 3 action planning meetings

When splitting these results by age category, the corresponding figures for the 39 participants in the over 18 groups: 23, 10 and 6 for the 39 participants in the over 18 groups; and for the 14 participants in the under 18 group the corresponding figures are: 2, 6 and 6.

**Figure 12: Attendance at action planning sessions (including ‘early completers’)**



■ Attended 6 or more action planning sessions   ■ 3-5 action planning sessions  
 ■ Fewer than 3 action planning sessions

Overall n=53; Over 18s n=39; Under 18s n=14

The average number of action planning sessions attended by the over 18s was 6.6, for the under 18s the average number of action planning sessions attended was 3.6.

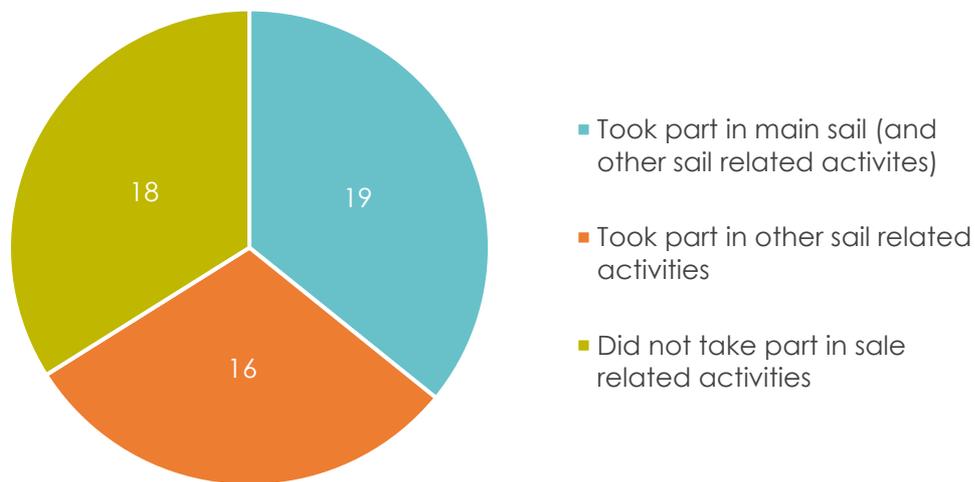
As with the group activities, one of the main reasons that participants did not attend the intended number of action planning sessions was because they had progressed into employment. Of the 12 participants who attended fewer than three action planning sessions, six had completed the programme early as they had started a new job. Of the 16 participants who attended between three and five action planning sessions, three completed the programme early, two progressed into employment and one progressed into further education.

### Qualifications

Across all participants in the programme, 200 qualifications were targeted and 124 were achieved. The average number of qualifications achieved by the over 18s was 3.9 and the average number for the under 18s was 2.4. The most commonly achieved qualifications were Health & Safety, Food Hygiene, First Aid, Fire Safety and Competent Crew Member (required for yacht trip). CatZero also facilitated more specific courses for individuals, for example in Java and Python programming and in mental health awareness.

### Sailing challenge

**Figure 13: Participation in sailing challenge (including ‘early completers’)**



19 programme participants took part in the ‘long sail’ to St. Katharine’s Dock, London and back. Prior to the main sail, 35 participants took part in related activities including a visit to the yacht, to the boat museum, and a ‘taster sail’ within the local area.

## Appendix B: Evidence Review

This chapter is a summary of evidence on the impacts of intervention programmes that share similarities with the CatZero YFF programme.

Initially, we summarise the key findings from a systematic review of the effectiveness of re-engagement interventions with young people who are NEET in general.<sup>12</sup> We then go on to look at the extent of the existing evidence relating to two of the core features of the CatZero programme:

1. the use of **Restorative Practice** to shape relationships and the environment for participants and staff/volunteers, and
2. the inclusion of the **immersive sailing experience**. Here, we have looked at the body of evidence around the impact of sail training before moving on to review high-intensity residential experiences in general.

Finally, the review also touches briefly on some of the evidence surrounding the wider strategy of the Cat Zero program, namely the current understanding of key issues contributing to poor outcomes for young people and the use of Outcomes Based Accountability in services directed at young people.

### Findings from systemic review of interventions for NEETs

A 2017 systematic review and meta-analysis of re-engagement programmes for young NEET people found ‘*some evidence that intensive multi-component interventions effectively decrease unemployment amongst NEETs*’<sup>13</sup> but also concluded that the quality of the evidence is limited. The review consisted of 18 experimental and quasi-experimental trials; interventions included: social skills, vocational, or educational classroom-based training, counselling or one-to-one support, internships, placements, on-the-job or occupational training, financial incentives, case management, and individual support.

The review concluded that most successful Interventions in improving employment prospects were high-contact (i.e., long-term) and multi-component (i.e., involving a mix of methods such as classroom, work based, and individual support). Such interventions were shown to increase employment rates

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<sup>12</sup> Are we failing young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)? A systematic review and meta-analysis of re-engagement interventions. Lauren Mawn, Emily J Oliver, Nasima Akhter, Claire L. Bambra, Carole Torgerson, Chris Bridle and Helen J. Stain

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p1

by 4% against control groups. The authors also found small increases in long-term earning and reductions in welfare receipt. Sub-group analysis found greater effects amongst females while those who benefitted the least tended to be the most disadvantaged at the time of trial commencement.

The CatZero YFF-funded programme contains these features associated with success in that it is relatively high contact (the programme runs over a 12-month period) and also multi-component (with the learning / support taking place in a variety of different formats).

## Restorative Practice

### What is Restorative Practice?

Restorative Practice is an umbrella term for a philosophy that views relationships as an integral component to fostering positive and healthy environments. Instead of focussing on consequences or punishments for behaviour that is non-compliant, Restorative Practices try to focus on empowering people to restore relationships, resolve conflicts and build community in proactive and positive ways.<sup>14</sup> The literature around working restoratively talks in terms of creating a high challenge and high support environment which is ‘characterised by doing things with people, rather than to them or for them.’<sup>15</sup> The idea is that alongside interventions when harm has happened, efforts are also invested in practices that help to prevent harm and conflict occurring in the first place by creating a sense of belonging, safety, and social responsibility within a community. There is a strong focus on relationships with other community members and doing what is right by others rather than a heavy emphasis on rules. In terms of interventions when there has been harm, perpetrators are encouraged to focus on ‘making it right’ by trying to repair that relationship. Some of the tools that are sometimes used to administer Restorative practice are Peace Circles and Peer Mediation.

In part, the growth of interest in Restorative Practices has been in opposition to the concept of “zero tolerance” approaches to behaviour management. Zero tolerance approaches have been criticised for having disproportionately negative impacts on groups already facing disadvantage

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<sup>14</sup> Can Restorative Practices Improve School Climate and Curb Suspensions? An Evaluation of the Impact of Restorative Practices in a Mid-Sized Urban School District. Catherine H. Augustine, John Engberg, Geoffrey E. Grimm, Emma Lee, Elaine Lin Wang, Karen Christianson, Andrea A. Joseph.

<sup>15</sup> Wachtel T (2013) ‘Defining Restorative’. International Institute for Restorative Practices. Cumbria. Available online: [www.kipp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Principles\\_and\\_Practices\\_of\\_Restorative\\_Justice\\_in\\_Schools\\_Defining\\_Restorative.pdf](http://www.kipp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Principles_and_Practices_of_Restorative_Justice_in_Schools_Defining_Restorative.pdf)

(particularly those from ethnic minority backgrounds).<sup>16</sup> In schools, zero tolerance regimes have been associated with the concept of a “school-to-prison pipeline” where suspensions and exclusions lead to increased disengagement from learning and increased likelihood to engage in delinquency, criminal activity and eventual incarceration.<sup>17</sup>

### What does the evidence for Restorative Practice show?

Most of the literature on Restorative Practices focuses on its use either in schools or in the criminal justice system (with the term Restorative Justice often used in criminal justice context). The evidence from a school context feels the more relevant of these two settings to the CatZero intervention and hence this is what we have focused on here.

In the USA, a study of the implementation of Restorative Practices in the Pittsburgh Public Schools district in school years 2015–16 and 2016–17 used a randomised controlled trial to understand the effects of Restorative Practices on classroom and school climates and suspension rates. The authors examined a specific Restorative Practices program: the International Institute for Restorative Practices' SaferSanerSchools™ Whole-School Change program, which was implemented in a selected group of Pittsburgh schools under a program called Pursuing Equitable and Restorative Communities (PERC). The researchers found that this Restorative Practice program achieved several positive effects, including an improvement in overall school climates (as rated by teachers), a reduction in overall suspension rates, and a reduction in the disparities in suspension rates between African American and white students and between low- and higher-income students.<sup>18</sup>

In the UK, a pilot scheme which ran from 2004 to 2006, evaluated the roll-out of Restorative Practice in seventeen schools across three Scottish Councils, and found that “there was a clear positive impact on relationships in school”. The positive outcomes were caveated by the contexts within each school where the trial took place i.e., that there were a certain number of receptive staff, and that the initiative was supported by ‘commitment, enthusiasm, leadership and significant staff development’. The positive outcomes were identified through recording the views and actions

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<sup>16</sup> Restorative Consultation in Schools: A Systematic Review and Call for Restorative Justice Science to Promote Anti-Racism and Social Justice. Samuel Y. Song, Jacqueline M. Eddy, Heather M. Thompson, Brian Adams & Jennifer Beskow. Pages 462-476 | Received 23 Jun 2020, Accepted 01 Sep 2020, Published online: 18 Oct 2020.

<sup>17</sup> Dignity, Disparity and Desistance: Effective Restorative Justice Strategies to Plug the “School-to-Prison Pipeline”, January, 2013. Mara Schiff, Ph.D.

<sup>18</sup> *Can Restorative Practices Improve School Climate and Curb Suspensions? An Evaluation of the Impact of Restorative Practices in a Mid-Sized Urban School District.* Catherine H. Augustine, John Engberg, Geoffrey E. Grimm, Emma Lee, Elaine Lin Wang, Karen Christianson, Andrea A. Joseph.

of staff and pupils, as well as measuring a reduction in playground incidents, discipline referrals, exclusion and use of external behaviour support (Keane et al).<sup>19</sup>

Another large-scale evaluation of a Restorative Practice intervention called Learning Together took place between 2014-2017 in South-East England, and included 40 schools (including controls), and measured outcomes at 36 months post intervention.<sup>20</sup> The intervention used a clustered randomised control trial approach and focused on self-reported outcomes among pupils relating to experience of bullying and perpetration of aggression. The research found that the implementation of Restorative Practice had a small but significant effect on bullying, though no effect on aggression. The authors concluded that *“Interventions to promote student health by modifying the whole-school environment are likely to be one of the most feasible and efficient ways of addressing closely related risk and health outcomes in children and young people.”*

In addition to use in schools, in parts of the UK, Restorative Practice is also promoted for use in Local Authority children’s services. A guidance document issued by Leeds Council, for example, talks about Restorative Practice as being *‘widely established and accepted both nationally and internationally as a highly effective way of achieving better outcomes for children, young people and their families’*.<sup>21</sup> However, we did not find any literature on evaluations conducted on the use of Restorative Practice in this context.

Furthermore, we did not find any literature on evaluations conducted of the use of Restorative Practice in voluntary settings akin to the project being delivered by CatZero.

### Sail Training research

‘Sail Training’ is “an educational experience that occurs on board sailing vessel of various sizes in various context around the world. The educational experience has particular focus on personal and social development; ‘requires participants to confront many demanding challenges, both physical and

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<sup>19</sup> Restorative Practice in Three Scottish Councils: Final report on the evaluation of the first two years of the Pilot Projects 2004-2006. Jean Kane, Gwynedd Lloyd, Gillean McCluskey, Sheila Riddell, Joan Stead and Elisabeth Weedon,

<sup>20</sup> Effects of the Learning Together intervention on bullying and aggression in English secondary schools (INCLUSIVE): a cluster randomised controlled trial. Chris Bonell, Elizabeth Allen, Emily Warren, Jennifer McGowan, Leonardo Bevilacqua, Farah Jamal, Rosa Legood, Meg Wiggins, Charles Opondo, Anne Mathiot, Jo Sturgess, Adam Fletcher, Zia Sadique, Diana Elbourne, Deborah Christie, Lyndal Bond, Stephen Scott, Russell M Viner

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/docs/Restorative%20Practice%20One%20Minute%20Guide.pdf>

emotional'; and 'uses the experience for being at sea principally as a means to help people learn about themselves.'" (Sail Training International, 2010, para.1,4 as in Schijf, Allison, and Von Wold 2017). Fletcher (2020) points to early origins, noting that "Children and young people have always gone to sea, for example, in the eighteenth-century boys as young as six sailed aboard vessels of the Royal Navy and that in 1757, the Royal Navy introduced the role of Schoolmaster to complement the long-established oral traditions for vocational learning with the formal teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic to volunteer seamen and the 'other youth of the ship'"<sup>22</sup>

In a systematic review of research on sail training in 2017, sixteen studies were discussed offering an overview of the current research on sail training, with a focus on demographic characteristics, research strategies, and processes and outcomes,<sup>23</sup> and is a useful starting point for reviewing the evidence in support of sail training. In short, the main findings were that a limited set of methods are used in sail training research (relying heavily on self-reported outcomes); participants experience a positive long-term effect in regard to personal and social domains; structured program design can lead to better specified outcomes; and the effects of demographic characteristics such as gender, age, or socioeconomic background remain unexplored.

While the age and gender demographics were discussed in most of the studies included in the review, none provided socioeconomic breakdowns of sail training participants. Similarly, the outcomes explored through these studies focussed on personal and social themes but did not extend to impacts in terms of education or employment outcomes. Nonetheless, there was a strong trend in the evidence in support of sail training leading to personal changes, with 12 of the 16 studies demonstrating increases in self-esteem. In four of the studies, benefits in personal domains (e.g., elevated self-esteem and perceived self-efficacy) were sustained over time, with "changes still apparent over 12 months". While some of the studies included information about program (participant) costs, the mechanisms for funding the sail training and the impact of this on participation were missing, leading the authors to conclude that "limited data on the socioeconomic backgrounds of participants or on any patterns of relationship between socioeconomic status and sail training allow for no substantive conclusions to be drawn."

Schijf et al. also identify two significant process themes amongst the research on sail training: The 'unique nature of sail training' and 'structures voyage design' are aspects identified through several

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<sup>22</sup> Fletcher, E. "Sail training: using acculturation to activate a socio-cultural or natural pedagogy" Pre-publication text accepted Feb 2020 by *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*.

<sup>23</sup> Schijf, M. Allison, P. Von Wold, K. "Sail Training: A Systematic Review" in *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership* 2017, Vol.9, No. 2, pp.167-180.

individual studies. Both of these claims are considered in context of wilderness expeditions more generally and suggest that claims to uniqueness (such as ‘sail training transcends national and cultural boundaries’ and ‘that combination of limited space and restricted privacy, the movement of the vessel and the inescapability of the whole experience that makes living at sea so profoundly different from any dry land experience’) required further investigation. The claim that structured purposeful programs were effective at delivering personal and social outcomes was largely supported by the sail training literature, though these features were also demonstrated in adventure education more broadly.

Finally, the systematic review highlights the limited focus on the role of demographic characteristics including (crucially, for the relevance to the Cat Zero project) socioeconomic background, in the experience of sail training. The importance of contextual factors is highlighted, concluding that *“although contextual factors are often mentioned as descriptive characteristics of the experience, the role they play in the effects of sail training has not been adequately demonstrated nor sufficiently explored.”*

Another, more recent, piece of research can help to inform this last point: from the researcher/participant perspective, Eric Fletcher from Newcastle University<sup>24</sup> explores the rationale for self-reported changes (which, in themselves, aren’t the subject of inquiry in this research) in participants of sail training. Two paradigms for change (‘cultural community’ and ‘natural pedagogy’) are weighed up against a mass of observed and self-reported data gathered through an ethnographic case study of a 117-hour sail training voyage. This research contributes to the evidence base in terms of understanding the theory of change behind the potential impacts of sail training and explores parallels to Apprenticeships and ‘Character Education’ in other contexts. It suggests that the impacts of sail training are achieved through its likeness to an apprenticeship, where novices are immersed in an environment where learning is linked to authentic (essential) tasks and activities and thus facilitates the movement beyond previous known boundaries, e.g., for example the acquired experience of learning to push through seasickness, or the development of trust and relationship-building through crew membership.

“Whilst participants often learn technical sailing skills this is not the main purpose of modern-day sail training, rather the voyage presents opportunities for socio-cultural interactions as participants engage in the routine of authentic community endeavours as they live and work together.”

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<sup>24</sup> "Sail Training: using acculturation to activate a socio-cultural or natural pedagogy", Eric Fletcher in *Pedagogy Culture and Society*, February 2020

Fletcher concludes by suggesting that the power of sail training lies in the fact that “sail training voyage accommodates everyone’s ‘personal foundation of experience’ (after Boud and Walker 1990); the experience will mean something different to each participant (and practitioner) manifesting in individualised outcomes and, it is worth noting, extant studies have not successfully differentiated individual and group-based outcomes.”<sup>25</sup>

### High intensity residential challenges

Much of the evidence on sail training makes reference to the wealth of literature in the field of ‘adventure therapy’ where programmes targeting young people have incorporated an adventure component that removes participants from their usual environment and places them in a situation that is both physically demanding and reliant on working closely as part of a team. Many parallels are drawn between the two types of activities, which are helpful in identifying the unique impacts of sail training, as distinct from adventure therapies more generally. Furthermore, the literature surrounding adventure therapy offers more specific evidence in relation to socioeconomic factors and social policy outcomes and implications.

### What is the evidence of the impact of high intensity adventure challenges?

Two high profile UK interventions that incorporate a residential challenge are the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and Outward Bound scheme. Both are aimed at providing opportunities for people from all backgrounds to have new experiences outside their everyday routines.

The Duke of Edinburgh scheme has 3 levels of award that young people can achieve (bronze, silver and gold) and each involves 4 components (volunteering, skills development, physical activity and a team-based residential challenge). A 2007-2009 evaluation of the scheme used surveys of both young people and delivery staff and recorded positive responses about a wide range of different benefits including attitudes towards new experience, personal development, community engagement and physical and mental wellbeing.<sup>26</sup> They also found benefits in terms of employability skills and therefore employment prospects. This evaluation did not include any form of control or comparison group.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid (including reference made by Fletcher: Boud, David and Walker, David, 1990. “Making the most of experience.” *Studies in Continuing Education*, 12 (2): 61-80.)

<sup>26</sup> *The Impact of The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award on young people – Executive Summary*, Research by the University of Northampton 2007-2009, Pears Foundation

The Outward Bound Trust delivers a series of different residential programmes each of which they describe as combining four components: authentic adventure, the natural environment, deliberate learning, and a residential experience.<sup>27</sup> They believe that their courses can help participants achieve in a way which surpasses their previous sense of self-belief resulting in the growth of confidence and a greater awareness of their capabilities. They feel that overcoming physical and emotional challenges during their programme results in increased perseverance, resilience, and problem-solving skills. The Trust have put in place approaches to measuring the impact of their courses through asking participants to complete questionnaires at the beginning and end of their participation (and then again at a point some months after participation). They also collect feedback from teachers, parents and employers. Their questionnaires incorporate validated scales/metrics – mostly around the development of soft skills. For example, in their 2017 Social Impact report, they report that, at the 6-month point, 71% of participants continued to score higher in emotional control than they did before attending. For participants attending through their school, 95% of their teachers reported improvements in pupils' ability to keep going when they encountered difficulties and setbacks and 87% reported improvements in the speed at which they recover from setbacks.

There are a range of other international programmes that have reported similarly positive impacts:

1. One study of two different outdoor adventure activity programs (both mountain trekking experiences in Europe) observed that these experiences had increased self-efficacy, mindfulness, and subjective well-being. They also noted a reduction in feeling of time pressure and mental stress for participants.<sup>28</sup>
2. In another study, a group of 14-year-olds who spent eight days in the wilderness of a remote region of Norway, scored higher in on life satisfaction, happiness, mindfulness, and self-efficacy metrics after their experience (than before the experience) and scored lower in perceived stress. Overall, the evaluators concluded that outdoor education and wilderness programs can foster good mental health in youths and young adults.
3. A program in Singapore which was aimed particularly at young people with persistent truancy and absenteeism from school, offered 136 participants participation in a five-day "intercept" Outward Bound program (and included a no-treatment comparison group). The results were generally positive, with improved attendance of both academic and non-academic activities up to 3 months after participation. The study recorded a short-term positive impact on goal setting (at one month follow-up) though this was not observed at the three-month follow-up point. There were also positive improvements at one month and

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<sup>27</sup> *Outward Bound Social Impact Report 2017*, The Outward Bound Trust.

<sup>28</sup> Mental health benefits of outdoor adventures: Results from two pilot studies. Michael Mutz & Johannes Muller. *Journal of Adolescence*. Volume 49, June 2016, Pages 105-11

three-month follow-ups in participants problem solving abilities, though not statistically significant.<sup>29</sup>

Some more specialist programmes with a high intensity residential challenge have targeted more niche audiences facing particular disadvantage. In the literature some of these are referred to as offering ‘adventure therapy’. There are examples of programmes that have targeted a range of different groups, including young offenders, ‘at-risk’ or vulnerable youth, veterans and cancer survivors.<sup>30</sup>

One study in this category, evaluated outcomes of an outdoor adventure challenge program (OACP) on 84 prison inmates.<sup>31</sup> The program consisted of 2 weeks of fitness training, skill development, and challenge experiences, followed by a 5-day wilderness expedition. Outcomes were measured in three ways: reconviction statistics, content analysis of qualitative data, and an experimental approach involving psychometric measures of attitudinal change. Reconviction data indicated positive though nonsignificant trends among those participating in the adventure therapy programme over matched controls. The qualitative inquiry revealed a variety of perceived positive impacts from participation, and results from psychometric evaluation showed significant improvement in group cohesion, trust, self-efficacy and well-being. There was also an improvement (not significant) on motivation to change for the participant group, whereas no significant improvements were found in the control group. Overall, the authors concluded that the results provided some support for the use of OACP as a rehabilitative intervention with offenders. They also felt that the results made a case for evaluations of similar interventions for other settings, stating *“The data also validate the use of OACP as an adjunct to other correctional programs, helping to create the conditions for effective facilitation of other correctional interventions.”*

Another large-scale systematic review of physical activity programs in 2011 (which incorporated outdoor adventure programmes alongside others focussing specifically on sport or fitness)<sup>32</sup> concluded that there was evidence of these programmes leading to improvements in resilience and

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<sup>29</sup> An outcome evaluation of the implementation of the Outward Bound Singapore five-day “intercept” program. Rebecca P. Ang, Nurul Fariyah, Steven Lau. Journal of Adolescence Volume 37, Issue 6, August 2014, Pages 771-778.

<sup>30</sup> Pilot evaluation of physical and psychological effects of a physical trek programme including a dog sledding expedition in children and teenagers with cancer, Clothilde Vallet, Nicolas André, Jean-Claude Gentet, Arnaud Verschuur, Gérard Michel, Frédéric Sotteau, Cécile Martha, and Laurent Grélot. E Cancer Medical Science.

<sup>31</sup> An Evaluation of the Outdoor Adventure Challenge Programme (OACP) at Rolleston Prison. Elaine Mossman. 1998.

<sup>32</sup> Review: A systematic review of the impact of physical activity programmes on social and emotional well-being in at-risk youth. Child and Adolescent Mental Health. David R. Lubans, Ron C. Plotnikoff, Nicole J. Lubans

self-concept among at-risk young people. Of the seven adventure programmes included in this review, five resulted in significant improvements in measures of social and emotional well-being. The authors concluded that outdoor education programmes may contribute to reducing the negative behaviours typically demonstrated by at-risk youth. While their findings were generally positive, they also commented that the quality of evidence available in this area was relatively poor particularly around longer-term outcomes/impacts. This review also tried to look at isolating the ‘active ingredients’ of adventure therapy programmes but concluded that this is very difficult to do based on the evidence currently available. They noted:

It is not entirely clear which aspects of the outdoor adventure programmes are responsible for inducing psychological benefits and previous studies have included family components in addition to the adventure activities (Minor & Elrod, 1994; Pommier & Witt, 1995). Although outdoor adventure programmes are generally delivered in the wilderness, an unfamiliar environment is perhaps the most important aspect of the experience (Gass, 1993). Adventure programmes tend to include traditional therapy techniques, such as self-reflection, and journal writing to encourage participants to process their experiences (West & Crompton, 2001). Calculated risk taking, the mastery of challenging tasks and positive social support from instructors and peers may explain the improvements in outcomes observed among at-risk youth attending outdoor adventure programmes. Furthermore, it remains untested whether the changes induced through participation in these programmes are sustained once youth return to their daily routines.

The types of social, emotional, and mental health attributes where positive impacts have been recorded through some of these high-intensity adventure challenge programmes are those that have also been identified as key risk factors for having reduced employability.<sup>33</sup> This led Berman and Davis-Berman<sup>34</sup> to conclude that there is perhaps suggest a role for programmes that incorporate this type of challenge in helping to tackle youth unemployment, if both the delivery and the evaluation of activities can be standardised to such an extent as to justify their extended roll-out.

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<sup>33</sup> *Employability Development Theory: Policy Implications for Supporting Youth at Risk of Limited Employment* (YARLE). McGirr, Mandy. 2020.

<sup>34</sup> *The Role of Therapeutic Adventure in Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Children and Adolescents: Finding a Niche in the Health Care Systems of the United States and the United Kingdom*. Dene Berman, Jennifer Davis-Berman. March 2013.

## Evidence in support of the wider strategy employed by CatZero

Understanding the unique challenges faced by the targeted demographic of the CatZero project can be helped by looking at the evidence surrounding Workless Families<sup>35</sup>. This research published by the DWP in 2017 draws attention to the complexity of barriers faced by families experiencing persistent worklessness, and the associated outcomes for children growing up in families experiencing persistent worklessness. The conclusion of this document was a summary of new government policies aimed at addressing the underlying issues contributing to worklessness, for both parents and children in workless families.

Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) or Results Based Accountability, is a system of change management that has been employed across a range of social services in the UK, and is seen to be complimentary to the use of Restorative Practice. It's designer Mark Friedman claims that by simplifying the problem and reducing the measured outcomes to questions such as 'how much have we done' and 'how well have we done it', service providers are better able to answer the ultimate question of 'what difference has it made?'. It also emphasizes an approach which seeks to identify the underlying problems of a given situation, and to take a diagnostic approach to solving it.<sup>36</sup>

The effectiveness of this approach is evidenced by an evaluation of a programme of work in Leeds providing children and social care services, which makes use of both Restorative Practice across a range of service programs, and also Outcomes Based Accountability to assess the impact of these interventions.<sup>37</sup> Measured impacts are positive (though short-term, six months on) but note the importance of Restorative Practice being implemented structurally within the social services department in addition to within the services being delivered (organisational change).

Elsewhere, OBA has been used to develop a 'Framework of Outcomes for Young People'<sup>38</sup> which is designed to highlight the fundamental importance of social and emotional capabilities to the achievement of all other outcomes for all young people. It proposes a model of seven interlinked

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<sup>35</sup> Improving lives: helping workless families, DWP, 2017

<sup>36</sup> *Trying Hard is Not Good Enough: How to Produce Measurable Improvements for Customers and Communities*, Mark Friedman (Parse Publishing), 2015

<sup>37</sup> "Leeds Family Valued" Mason et. al.: Department of Education, 2017 - [https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/29566/1/Leeds\\_Family\\_Valued\\_-\\_Evaluation\\_report.pdf](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/29566/1/Leeds_Family_Valued_-_Evaluation_report.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> "A framework of outcomes for young people" Bethia McNeil, Neil Reeder and Julia Rich: The Young Foundation, July 2012.

clusters of social and emotional capabilities that are of value to all young people, supported by an evidence base demonstrating their link to outcomes such as educational attainment, employment, and health. Along with toolkit and matrices, this framework offers a constructive approach for measuring the potential impact of programs seeking to affect change for young people, such as CatZero.

### Key implications of the evidence review

Although we have not found evaluations of individual programmes directly comparable to that delivered by CatZero – there is an evidence base which has reported positive impacts associated with different elements of the programme:

1. Sail training in general, as a modality for youth development
2. The multi-component composition of the programme
3. The emphasis on Restorative Practice
4. And the use of an Adventure Challenge component.

In the case of both Restorative Practice and Adventure Challenges, there is evidence of positive impacts when programmes have focussed particularly on more marginalised / disadvantaged groups of young people. The evidence for Sail training, on the other hand, shows positive impacts on self-esteem and self-perception for participants (though not specifically for marginalised/disadvantaged groups).

Generally, the impacts that have been recorded for Restorative Practice and Adventure Challenges are strongest in relation to short-term ‘soft’ outcomes, such as improved social skills, wellbeing, ability to handle stress and increased confidence. Less evidence is available about whether positive impacts are sustained in the long-term and whether there are any ‘harder’ impacts on either educational or employment outcomes (although a causal link between improved soft skills and improved employment outcomes is accepted as being a reasonable assumption in much of the literature). For Restorative Practice in particular, the most relevant evaluations seem to have focused on its use in schools and there do not seem to be any reported evaluations of its use in a more voluntary setting.

These findings indicate a reasonable evidence base on which to base the hypothesis that the CatZero programme will be successful in delivering positive benefits for disadvantaged young people. The use of Restorative Practice and Adventure Challenge together in voluntary environment

creates a programme that appears to be relatively unique meaning that an evaluation of it has scope to add to the overall evidence base around what works in improving youth employability.

## Appendix C: Participant Consent Form



### Taking part in research about your experience at CatZero

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this research! Please take a moment to read through this form. It explains what will be done with the information you give us as part of today's discussion.

At the end, if you are still happy to take part, please tick each box and sign to say you understand that...



...taking part will involve talking to an independent researcher from IFF Research about your experience with CatZero

...you don't have to answer every question and you can withdraw from the research at any point. Participation throughout is entirely voluntary and will have no impact on any current or future dealings with CatZero in any way

...the researcher will ask to record the discussion - just so they don't have to remember all of it. The recording will only be listened to by researchers at IFF and will be deleted once the project ends

...what you say will be confidential, the research findings will not identify you, and none of your personal information will be shared outside of the IFF research team

...your personal details will be stored securely by IFF Research for a period of six months after your participation, at which point they will be destroyed

I have read this information and I am happy to take part

Would you prefer an Amazon  or PayPal  voucher?

<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Print full name:</b>	
<b>Email address:</b> <i>(we will only use this to send your voucher)</i>	
<b>Date:</b>	

# Appendix D: Participant Journey Map

**KEY**

- Experienced by *all* participants
- CatZero staff/programme
- Data Collection
- Third parties
- Evaluation relevant data
- Experienced by *some* participants

## CatZero YFF Programme Participant Journey

