



## Castleford Housing Project

# EVALUATION REPORT

Dr David Wilkinson, Research Toolkit  
June 2018



## Acknowledgements

This project was a collaboration between Go Higher West Yorkshire and Keepmoat Homes - working with two partner schools: Castleford Academy and Airedale Academy.



National Collaborative  
Outreach Programme

# **Contents:**

Executive summary	5
Introduction	6
Participant group	6
Keepmoat Homes	6
Go Higher West Yorkshire	6
Programme activity	7
Impact	
The programme format and structure	9
Development of financial skills	9
Teacher feedback	9
Construction site visit	11
Presentation skills	11
Working with mentors and facilitators	11
Learning gain	
Greatest increase	12
Smallest increase	12
Engagement with parents	14
Adaptations and changes	17
Strategy and values	18



*"The most interesting part for me was being able to look at all the different layers of house-building and all the work that goes into it. We've learnt about everything - how houses are built from the ground upwards!"*

**Deacon,**  
**Castleford Academy**  
**student**

# Executive summary

- The Go Higher West Yorkshire & Keepmoat Homes programme is a collaborative intervention designed to raise career and Higher Education progression opportunities in the construction industry.
- Participants for the project were selected from two National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) partner schools, Castleford Academy and Airedale Academy.
- The programme undertaken by participating students focused on an activity-based house-building project. Mixed teams of students were tasked with calculating costs and profits involved in housebuilding, designing a room in the showhome and presenting their project ideas.
- The opportunity to work with other schools was a beneficial element of the programme. Students enjoyed working in groups that were mixed between the two participating schools.
- Financial assessment of building materials and associated costs in the project tasks enabled all participating students to contribute to activities that helped sharpen their financial literacy skills.
- School feedback, provided informally at a project review meeting, indicated that the programme worked well with Year 9 students as they could begin to make links between the project activities and their school-based work.
- All students stated that they enjoyed the site visit immensely. Timetabled to take place mid-way through the project, this half-day visit was based at a working construction site nearby to the two partner schools.
- Although most students were nervous about presenting their work to others, all were proud to show their work to parents and carers.
- All participating students welcomed the opportunity to work with a group-assigned mentor. This person crucially provided detailed and contextualised feedback on the emerging content of the group presentations.
- The greatest increase, or gain, has been in relation to questions focused upon construction and career routes/Higher Education progression opportunities. The considerable learning gains within these areas suggest that this project has been successful in drawing clear links between construction career pathways and relevant Higher Education progression options.
- Some parents welcomed the opportunity for their children to explore options, whilst undertaking project work, for progression beyond school.
- The workshop sessions have been intensive and stretching. Some students would have welcomed more time to think about and discuss the content of the programme.
- Participating students had a good understanding of Keepmoat Homes and what they did as an organisation, but they were less confident about the remit of Go Higher West Yorkshire when asked about this at their final project session at University Centre at Wakefield College.
- This project complements the social responsibility values of Keepmoat Homes in that it facilitates their community partnership work, and helps to support local organisations, programmes and projects.
- Collaborating with business to develop meaningful and contextualised learning projects also links into a Go Higher West Yorkshire philosophy of working with local industry providers to support local developmental need.
- With a clear focus on technically-driven skills, our project supports young people to follow a progression path into construction and links to the Gatsby Benchmarks.

# Introduction

The Go Higher West Yorkshire & Keepmoat Homes programme is a collaborative intervention designed to raise career and Higher Education progression opportunities in the construction industry. Key and specific areas of interest for Keepmoat Homes, which link to progression drivers for Go Higher West Yorkshire included an exploration of students' knowledge, confidence and awareness around careers in construction. In addition, through an activity-based programme, Keepmoat Homes wished to provide accurate and contextualised information on routes into construction, including Higher Education opportunities, (with an emphasis on house-building).

## Participant group

Participants for the project were selected from two National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) partner schools, Castleford Academy and Airedale Academy. Participants were selected based on their interest in the subject area, and their potential to benefit from the programme. The Airedale Academy students were geography students and the Castleford Academy students were studying the BTEC in Construction.

## Keepmoat Homes

Keepmoat Homes delivers high quality homes, often in areas that benefit greatly from housing-led urban regeneration. They build a range of styles and sizes of homes and seek to create long term partnerships with public and private sector organisations that have unused land or property, building homes and communities that are recognised for both their quality and value.

The company has a well-developed approach to engaging with the communities located around the sites they develop. Their inclusive approach to partnership working and community engagement forms a central part of their Corporate and Social Responsibility Strategy.

Through their community partnerships, Keepmoat Homes provide support to local organisations, programmes and projects. This commitment to community support enables areas to flourish and be places where people want to live, work and play.

## Go Higher West Yorkshire

Go Higher West Yorkshire is a partnership of 12 Higher Education providers who operate the OfS-funded National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) in West Yorkshire. Through partner Higher Education providers, Go Higher West Yorkshire offers a diverse range of progression opportunities for people of all ages to access Higher Education - including apprenticeships, diplomas and flexible degree programmes.

Participating school	Students involved in the project
Castleford Academy	15 Year 9 students (12 boys, 3 girls)
Airedale Academy	16 Year 9 students (13 girls, 3 boys)

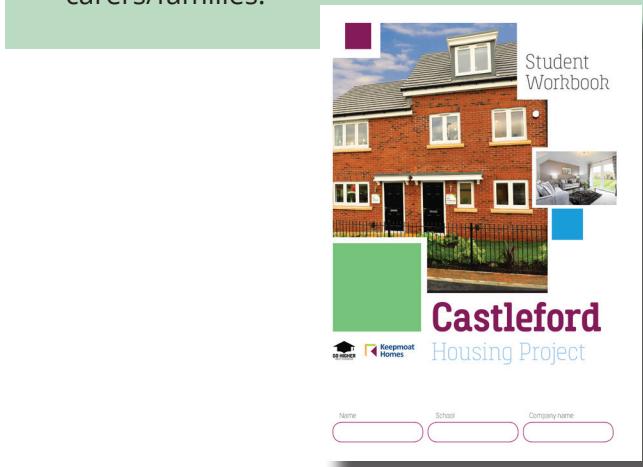
# Programme activity

The programme undertaken by participating students focused on an activity-based house-building project. Mixed teams were guided and supported in developing their project ideas by assigned mentors and structured activities provided in the project 'Student handbook'. Mentors consisted of school teaching staff, representatives from Keepmoat Homes and Go Higher West Yorkshire, and undergraduate students from partner Higher Education providers. Project sessions were usually timetabled to take place after the end of the school day, although the site visit took place in the morning and the presentation event at the end of the project took place in the evening. Most sessions were hosted at one school site (Airedale Academy) as this enabled project materials to be kept and stored in one location.

## Castleford Housing Project

Students participating in this project were assigned 'higher level' job roles within construction including quantity surveying, project management and interior design. Routes into these roles through Higher Education were highlighted to the students through their school-based sessions. Project tasks included:

- Calculating the cost and profit for a housing development.
- Researching local house prices.
- Researching and exploring the sales and marketing of new build houses.
- Deciding on a name for their housebuilding company and a new housing development.
- Designing a room for the showhome.
- Presenting their project ideas to their peers, school staff, Keepmoat Homes and parent/carers/families.



Session	Location
Project launch and 1st student workshop	Castleford Academy
2nd student workshop	Airedale Academy
Site visit – Flass Lane construction site	Castleford
3rd student workshop	Airedale Academy
4th student workshop	Airedale Academy
5th student workshop	Airedale Academy
Student presentation event	University Centre, Wakefield College



# Impact

## The programme format and structure

The opportunity to work with other schools was a beneficial element of the programme. Students enjoyed working in groups that were mixed between the two participating schools. Eathen, a student from Airedale Academy commented on the first session which launched the project at Castleford Academy: *"The most interesting and enjoyable thing about the project has been working with my team and collaborating with other students."*

## Development of financial skills

Financial assessment of building materials and associated costs in the project tasks enabled all participating students to contribute to activities that helped sharpen their financial literacy skills. Some excelled in this part of the project and enjoyed the stretching nature of the tasks: *"Well today we have been going on the internet and researching how much a house costs in a particular area ... I'd consider a job in construction because it's well paid, and it's a good job to have."* Eathen, Airedale Academy.

## Teacher feedback

School feedback, provided informally at a project review meeting, indicated that the programme worked well with Year 9 students as they could begin to make links between the project activities and their school-based work. This was particularly so for the Castleford Academy cohort of students, who could directly reference the content of the programme to their BTEC Construction course. Anecdotal evidence, collated by teachers centrally engaged in the project work, suggested that attitude and performance in school has improved for many participating students.





*"Today we have been going on the internet and researching how much a house costs in a particular area. I'd consider a job in construction because it's well paid, and it's a good job to have."*

Eathen,  
Airedale Academy  
student

## Construction site visit

All students stated that they enjoyed the site visit immensely. Timetabled to take place midway through the project, this half-day visit was based at a working construction site nearby to the two partner schools. Deacon, a student from Castleford Academy has a keen interest in pursuing a career in the construction industry, and took inspiration from the visit: *"Today we've been looking at a construction site and how the houses are built. We've learnt a lot about the different stages of house building. The most interesting part for me was being able to look at all the different layers of house-building and all the work that goes into it. We've learnt about everything - how houses are built from the ground upwards!"*

## Presentation skills

Preparing for the final group presentations formed a large part of the third, fourth and fifth sessions. Although most students were nervous about presenting their work to others, all were proud to show their work to parents and carers. These preparatory sessions helped students to fully formulate their house-building solutions, whilst also allowing their creative sides to shine. Megan, an Airedale Academy student, explained: *"We have been preparing our mood-boards to accompany our presentation work. Using the mood boards has really helped us with our design and creative skills."*

## Working with mentors and facilitators

All participating students welcomed the opportunity to work with a group-assigned mentor (usually a member of school staff, Go Higher West Yorkshire NCOP officer, or student representative from a partner Higher Education provider). This person crucially provided detailed and contextualised feedback on the emerging content of the group presentations as the programme developed. One participant reviewed the presentation session after it had taken place: *"The presentations were fun and exciting - but presenting to such a formal group at the end made me very nervous ... now that it's over I feel really proud of myself though, well done us!"*



## Learning gain

The Research Toolkit Learning Gain Tool©, is an interactive resource capable of assessing and measuring impact of educational interventions. It uses pre- and post-activity data to explore impact from the perspective of the activity participant, school or stakeholder representative. This tool has been used successfully to assess change in provision in Hospital Trusts, examined successful elements of university Summer School programmes, and is currently being used as part of a national evaluation of a work placement programme for Year 12/13 learners for the Royal College of General Practitioners.

## Greatest increase

The greatest increase, or gain, has been in relation to questions focused upon construction and career routes/Higher Education progression opportunities within the sector. The considerable learning gains within these areas suggest that this project has been successful in drawing clear links between construction career pathways and relevant Higher Education progression options. Contextualised knowledge and understanding were fairly low at the beginning of the programme. By the end of the programme students had a very clear understanding of the skills they should concentrate on and develop if they wished to pursue a career in construction.

## Smallest increase

The smallest increase was found in the indicating that all jobs in construction can be carried out by men or women. However, this can be viewed in a very positive way because students recorded high scores for this question at the beginning of the programme. A reasonable conclusion to draw from this is that participating students felt that gender was not a restriction on the type or kind of job you could do in the construction industry.

One other statement that produced a relatively small increase by the end of the programme was linked to working in groups. However, positive ratings were indicated at the beginning of the programme suggesting that participating students were accustomed to confidently working in groups.

KEEPMOAT CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

This survey has been developed to help you see how your skills/knowledge in a number of areas might change or develop as a result of your involvement in the Keepmoat construction project. Please answer each statement – with a rating of 1 to 10 by ticking the relevant box. 1 means you strongly disagree with the statement 10 means you strongly agree with the statement. Please be as honest as possible with your answers. There is no right and wrong answer. The responses you provide are only used to support you, we will not share your answers with anyone else.

(a) Your name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

(b) Your school (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

(c) Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please select the appropriate number below  
(1 means the worst I could possibly be, 10 means it is the best I could possibly be)

**About the construction industry**

(1) I know about the skills I should develop in order to work in the construction industry.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(2) I can identify a number of professional and management jobs available in the construction industry.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(3) I know about the variety of careers available in the construction industry.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(4) All jobs in construction can be carried out by men or women.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(5) I understand how jobs in construction are different from jobs in other areas e.g. healthcare (dentist/nurse/paramedic).  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**About Higher Education**

(6) I understand the different types of courses that Universities and Colleges offer.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(7) I understand the range of construction courses available to me from local Higher Education providers.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(8) I understand what it might be like to study construction with a local Higher Education provider.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(9) I feel I would be comfortable studying at a local Higher Education institutions.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**About me**

(10) I am confident working in groups.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

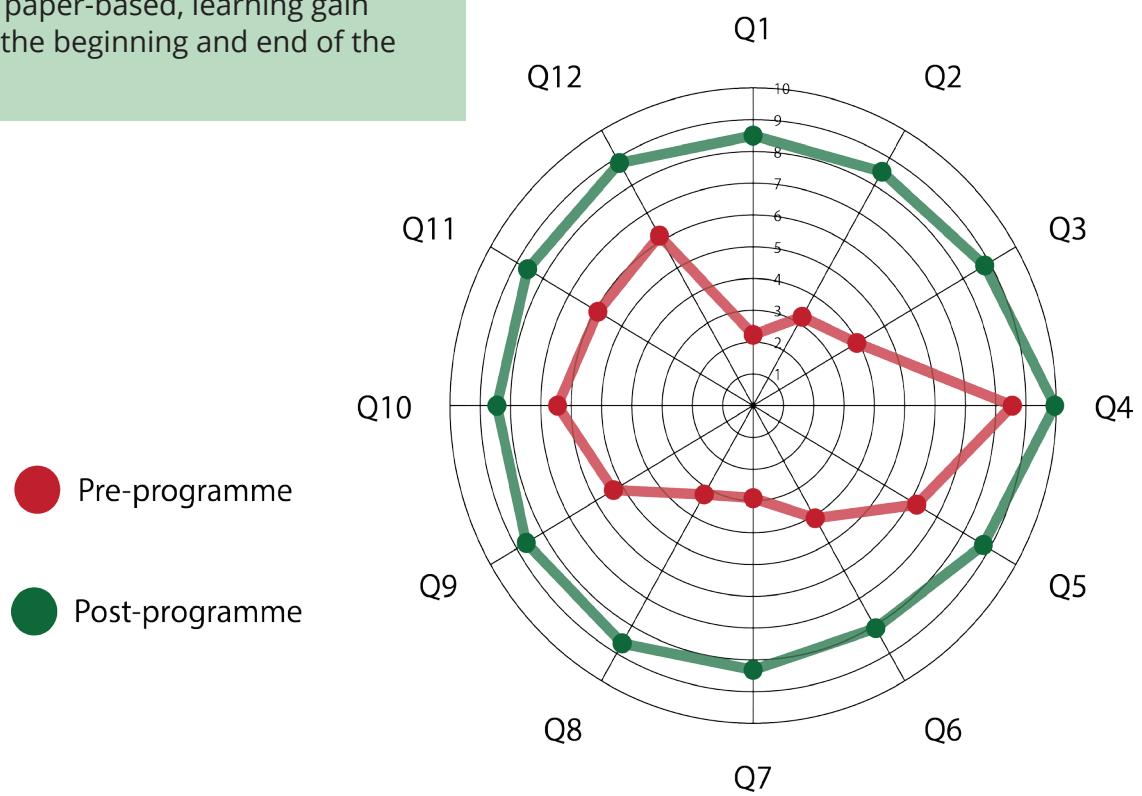
(11) I know my own strengths and how to develop them to ensure I am successful.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(12) I have a clear and achievable understanding of how to succeed.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**Keepmoat Homes**

## Learning Gain data

The analysis presented here is based on 22 paired responses received from participating students. Each student completed a 12-statement, paper-based, learning gain instrument at the beginning and end of the project.



Statement area	Pre-Prog.	Post-Prog.	Change	% Change
(1) I know about the skills I should develop in order to work in the construction industry.	2.23	8.50	6.27	282% ▲
(2) I can identify a number of professional and management jobs available in the construction industry.	3.23	8.50	5.27	163% ▲
(3) I know about the variety of careers available in the construction industry.	3.95	8.82	4.86	123% ▲
(4) All jobs in construction can be carried out by men or women.	8.55	9.95	1.41	16% ▲
(5) I understand how jobs in construction are different from jobs in other areas e.g. healthcare (doctors/nurses/paramedics).	6.23	8.77	2.55	41% ▲
(6) I understand the different types of courses that Universities and Colleges offer.	4.09	8.09	4.00	98% ▲
(7) I understand the variety of construction courses available to me from local Higher Education providers.	2.91	8.32	5.41	186% ▲
(8) I understand what it might be like to study construction with a local Higher Education provider.	3.23	8.64	5.41	168% ▲
(9) I feel I would be comfortable studying at a local Higher Education institution.	5.32	8.64	3.32	62% ▲
(10) I am confident working in groups.	6.45	8.45	2.00	31% ▲
(11) I know my own strengths and how to develop them to ensure I am successful.	5.91	8.59	2.68	45% ▲
(12) I have a clear and achievable understanding of how to succeed.	6.18	8.82	2.64	43% ▲

## Engagement with parents

Parents and carers were invited to participate in the final presentation evening held at University Centre at Wakefield College. Comments collated from feedback received by staff and student hosts indicated that parents and carers felt welcomed and were engaged with the event. Many stated how proud they were of participants for presenting in such a professional way.

Following the formal element of the presentation evening, a small number of parents and carers took advantage of the opportunity to explore the University Centre at Wakefield College. These were facilitated by student hosts and support staff who provided a less formalised interface between the programme leaders and parents.

Some parents welcomed the opportunity for their children to explore options, whilst undertaking project work, for progression beyond school. One parent compared this to the opportunities he'd had whilst at school: *"When I was at school we didn't have the same kind of opportunity to undertake Apprenticeships that they do now. We basically saw the careers adviser and then, from that, went to work. That was it. Now they've got much more opportunity to do more for themselves."*

*"When I was at school we didn't have the same kind of opportunity to undertake Apprenticeships that they do now. We basically saw the careers adviser and then went to work. That was it. Now they've got much more opportunity to do more for themselves."*

Parent attending the final presentation session at the University Centre at Wakefield College



*"The presentations were fun and exciting – but presenting to such a formal group at the end made me very nervous ... now that it's over I feel really proud of myself though, well done us!"*

Participating student



## **Adaptations and changes**

This has been an ambitious project, working with two different schools and developing content that facilitates a more enhanced and realistic view of the construction industry and Higher Education. As a result, the sessions have been intensive and stretching. Some students would have welcomed more time to think about and discuss the content of the programme.

In total, the programme consisted of 10-hours facilitated or teacher-led time; and whilst students recognised that this was a considerable amount of time for project work of this nature, two more facilitated sessions would have been helpful in enabling them to develop more detailed mood boards and polished presentations.

Participating students had a good understanding of Keepmoat Homes and what they did as an organisation, but they were less confident about the remit of Go Higher West Yorkshire when asked about this at their final project session at the University Centre at Wakefield College. Perhaps more accessible information could be provided to students that succinctly outlines the role and function of Go Higher West Yorkshire in promoting positive messages about progression and Higher Education.

## Strategy and values

This project complements the social responsibility values of Keepmoat Homes in that it facilitates their community partnership work, and helps to support local organisations, programmes and projects. Both schools involved in the project work indicated that they had developed sustained links with Keepmoat Homes and are looking forward to continuing their relationship with the company.

This project provided an immersive experience for participants with a clear focus on the progression options available for them in the construction industry. As such the project adds value to a core strategic aim of Go Higher West Yorkshire - enhancing and boosting progression rates amongst disadvantaged young people.

Collaborating with business to develop meaningful and contextualised learning projects also links into a Go Higher West Yorkshire philosophy of working with local industry providers to support local developmental need. Working with local partner Higher Education providers (via students and other support staff) also helped to showcase different routes into Higher Education and how Higher Education leads into the world of work.

Through our interactive and immersive project, we have supported the subtle development of industry-relevant careers information in our two partner schools, clearly linking to a number of the Gatsby benchmarks of Good Career Guidance (namely: benchmark 4 – linking curriculum learning to careers, benchmark 5 – encounters with employers and employees, and benchmark 6 – experiences of workplaces). With a clear focus on technically-driven skills, our project supports young people to follow a progression path into construction.

At the final presentation evening meeting all of the students indicated that they were more interested in exploring what the construction industry had to offer: “I knew a bit about construction before the programme, but I now know lots more about what it involves and the job opportunities there are”. Participating student.



*"I knew a bit about construction before the programme, but I now know lots more about what it involves and the job opportunities there are".*

Participating student



Want to know more?

Scan this QR code to read our blog and view the digital story of the project.



National Collaborative  
Outreach Programme

If you would like more information about our work at Go Higher West Yorkshire or the National Collaborative Outreach Programme, please visit the website or email us:  
<http://www.gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk>      [hello@gohigherwestyorks.co.uk](mailto:hello@gohigherwestyorks.co.uk)