

HEALTH AND WELLBEING REPORT



CALDERDALE

APRIL 2024 – MARCH 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY


This report presents an overview of Proper Job's health and wellbeing work in Calderdale from April 2024 to March 2025. It captures the impact of our LAB and LAB Life programmes, which engage marginalised individuals through creativity and therapeutic methods.

Key findings include a 94% progression rate into positive activity and a wellbeing value of £24 generated for every £1 invested. The report also introduces two new proposals:

LAB Working Well, supporting those recently signed off work with mental health issues; and *The Boys Done Good*, a targeted intervention for young men aged 18–25. These proposals aim to address rising mental ill health and economic inactivity through innovative, inclusive practice.

OVERVIEW

Proper Job delivers health, wellbeing and employability projects through creativity, the arts, and psychotherapy-informed approaches. This report is a snapshot of the work that has taken place over the past year – alongside our emerging ideas for the future.

 *Our vision for Calderdale is to be a place where we can realise our potential whoever we are – whether our voice has been heard or unheard in the past.*

Calderdale Health and Wellbeing Strategy

We share Calderdale's vision for inclusive health and wellbeing. Our team – who live and work locally – understands the complex pressures of our beautiful, diverse, and often rainy community. That local knowledge is at the heart of the innovative and inclusive work we deliver.



TACKLING INEQUALITY IN CALDERDALE

Over 50% of households in Calderdale are affected by unemployment, poor health, low skills, or overcrowding.

Our LAB and LAB Life programmes are designed to support those most affected by these inequalities – reaching people who are often excluded or hidden from mainstream support. More than 30% of our participants come from the most deprived communities in Calderdale, and we work with a wide range of referral partners to identify those who need us most.

Participant Breakdown (Index of Multiple Deprivation):

- Decile 1 (Lowest 10%) – 31.29%**
- Decile 2 (Lowest 20%) – 18.7%**
- Decile 3 (Lowest 30%) – 13.31%**

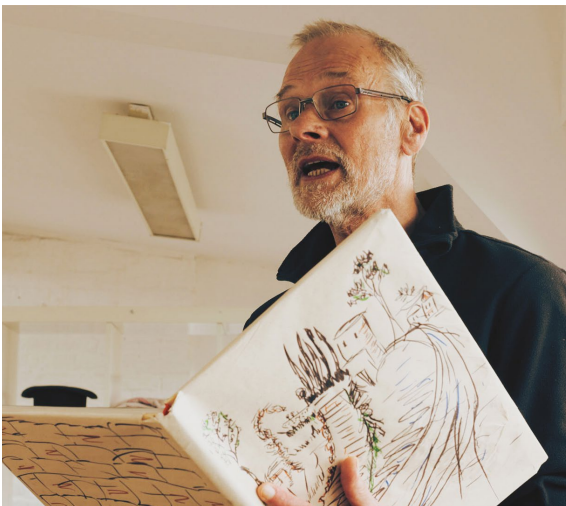
We use creativity to bring people together – to build confidence, improve health and reduce isolation. After taking part in LAB:

- 90% report healthier eating**
- 90% report increased physical activity**
- 90% report improved wellbeing**

Perhaps most powerfully, almost all report feeling less lonely. This matters: more than one-third of UK adults over 45 feel lonely. In Calderdale, nearly 20 in every 100 people under 66 live alone – more than the national average. Nearly a quarter of older adults in Calderdale are considered socially isolated. (Social isolation is associated with a 50% increased risk of dementia and a 29% increased risk of heart disease and a 32% increased risk of stroke).

A PROVEN MODEL OF IMPACT

Our model combines innovative group-based activities with sensitive, targeted community engagement to reach the most isolated and most marginalised. This combination helps people build confidence and wellbeing, and from there, progress into volunteering, employment or education.



94% of participants move on to positive activity.

This approach is a proven springboard for the development of new innovative practices to tackle issues of economic inactivity and unemployment.

PROGRESSION IN CALDERDALE

Of the 118 people that Proper Job work with 16% progressed to employment. We are particularly successful with inactive individuals, with 89% of all this group progressing onto positive activity.

This statistic for inactive individuals is particularly startling when considering the multiple barriers to participation that many of our participants have. It suggests that a more holistic approach to working with those individuals, from engagement to inclusive group work, to a warm, welcoming centre where participants can feel at home, has real impact. This alongside a series of interventions and approaches which encourages participants to stretch and challenge themselves results in high levels of progression into employment, education and volunteering.



I have mobility problems and I'm waiting to find out whether I have a blood clot in my leg; with a follow up appointment to come soon. I also have arthritis in my hips and deterioration in my spine. All of this has been a barrier to learning for me.

Having completed the LAB Project, I feel much more confident in myself, and I've also met people who are going to be friends for life. I'm hoping to find full time work now and I have just started volunteering on the LAB course, as well as regularly attending a craft group for social and creative benefit.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF PARTICIPANTS IN CALDERDALE

GENDER

Cis Male - **48.61%**

Cis Female - **50%**

Trans Male - **1.39%**

ETHNICITY

Total BAME **27%**

Arab - **2.78%**

Asian or Asian British – Indian - **4.17%**

Asian or Asian British – Pakistani - **5.56%**

Asian or Asian British – Other - **5.56%**

Black or Black British- African - **9.72%**

Mixed – White and Black Carribean - **1.39%**

White – British - **66.67%**

White – Other - **1.39%**

Other - **2.78%**

QUALIFICATIONS

Total Below Level 2 - **61%**

None - **19.44%**

Entry - **13.89%**

Level 1 - **27.78%**

Level 2 (Full English and Maths GCSEs) - **11.11% (8/72)**

Level 3 (A' Levels, Btec) - **12.50% (9/72)**

Level 4 (Diploma) - **1.39% (1/72)**

Level 5 (Diploma, Non Honours Degree) - **1.39% (1/72)**

Level 6 (Honours Degree, Post Grad Diploma) - **8.33% (6/72)**

Level 7 (Masters) - **4.17% (3/72)**

EMPLOYMENT

Employed - **4.17%**

Unemployed - **72.22%**

Refugee/Asylum seeker - **23.61%**

CHANGES IN WELLBEING

Measuring wellbeing is challenging, – but vital. In 2019, we worked with Josh Meek (then of The Big Issue, now Chief Impact Officer at Unity Trust Bank) to develop a robust approach using the NHS-approved Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale to measure changes in wellbeing for our participants.

**Using this model, we've been able to show clear social value:
In 2024/25, every £1 invested in Proper Job's projects
has generated the equivalent of £24 in improved mental
wellbeing.**



I had not been out of my house alone for 5 years before the LAB Project. I had lost all confidence in myself and felt completely outcast from society.

The LAB Project has helped with my confidence much more than anything else ever has. It has given me the opportunity to be involved in activities that I never thought possible for myself.

I graduated from university 8 years ago but have never been employed. This has affected my mental health and confidence so much that I started to doubt that I would ever know how it feels to have a job.

I'm really impressed with how much all of this has changed me in such a short amount of time, and it is thanks to the support I received during the course.

I now feel positive about my future for the first time in my adult life.

LAB Project participant

FUTURE DIRECTION: INNOVATION AND NEXT STEPS

Based on more than a decade of experience in Calderdale, we believe there is now an opportunity – and an imperative – to take bold next steps to genuinely address some of the critical issues facing our communities. Rather than simply continue with business as usual, we'd like to explore two new targeted interventions, designed to tackle rising mental ill health, economic inactivity, and social disconnection.

These proposals are rooted in our proven methods – but shaped by emerging challenges.

1. LAB WORKING WELL

Using creative practice to support people experiencing mental ill health to remain in or return to meaningful work.

OVERVIEW

Building on our successful LAB wellbeing model, this new strand supports people recently signed off work with mental health issues. We aim to intervene within the first six weeks of absence – a period shown to be critical in preventing long-term detachment from the labour market.

We will work closely with local employers, GPs, job centres and mental health providers to identify participants ideally within the first 6 weeks of leaving employment.

Each cohort of 8–15 people will take part in a focused programme totalling 25–30 hours over one week, using creativity to build resilience and develop practical, personalised coping strategies. The peer support of a group with shared experiences is central to the approach.

At the end of the week, participants will assess their own readiness to return to work and set goals with the support of Proper Job staff. Ongoing one-to-one follow-up will help ensure these goals are met or exceeded.

Individuals may also be identified who are at risk of leaving work due to mental illness. In these cases, we can also offer weekly 3-hour sessions to offer support to keep these individuals in work.

2. THE BOYS DONE GOOD

A creative intervention to support young men aged 18–25 into meaningful futures.

OVERVIEW

We know that once young people finish mandatory education at 18, they are becoming more likely to enter their bedrooms rather than the labour market. This is more likely with young men. Accessing this group is particularly difficult as they may still be supported by parents.

We want to pilot innovative approaches to engage this group – from working with local influencers, musicians and gamers to partnering with colleges to identify those at risk. We recognise the engagement phase will be the most intensive and resource-heavy.

Once engaged, participants will begin online wellbeing and personal development activities, delivered by staff trained during the COVID-19 pandemic. Online delivery acts as a bridge into face-to-face sessions, helping break down initial barriers.

The group will then take part in a creative process using the techniques of Augusto Boal and the Theatre of the Oppressed, creating characters through whom they can safely explore feelings, beliefs, and decisions. This approach helps develop confidence, insight, and agency.

The characters' behaviour can be explored in multiple contexts and the outcomes discussed by the group, considering the most positive options for the character, and so in turn, themselves.

After this process of self-development and affirmation, we will support participants to access real opportunities. At our “progression events,” we invite 10–15 employers and partner organisations to meet participants and offer next steps – from volunteering and training to employment.

CONTACT

For more information on any of the above or to explore bespoke options Chloe@properjob.org.uk or visit www.properjob.org.uk/the-lab-project