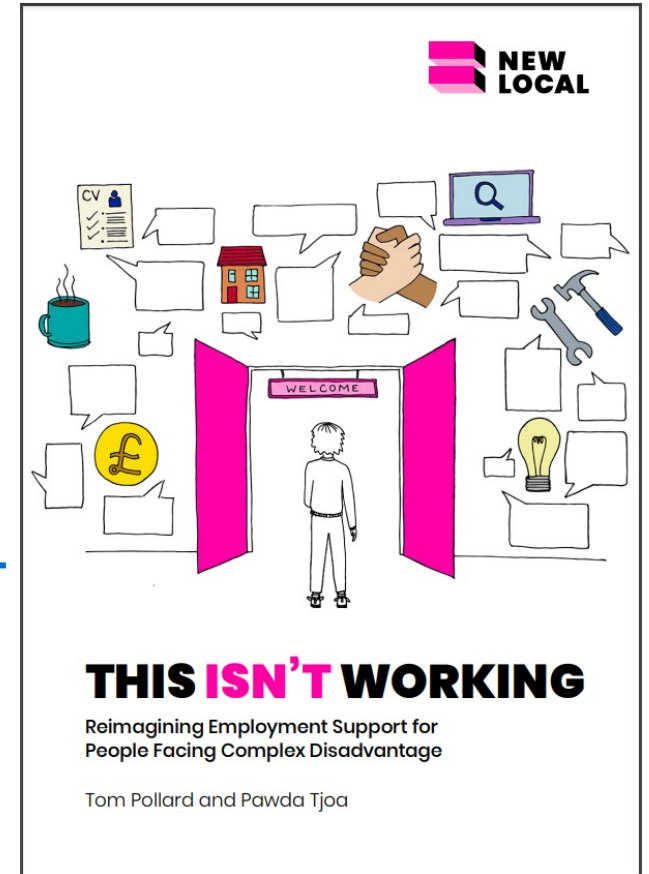
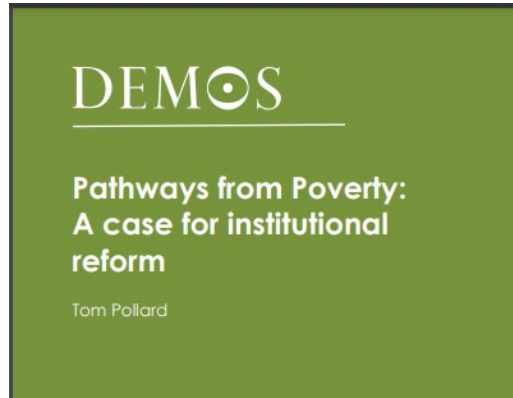


Reimagining Employment Support: From DWP-Centric to Community-Powered

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 @pollardtom

A little bit about me...

mind



THINK
AHEAD

What's the problem we were trying to address?



Over two million people are on unemployment benefits due to disabilities & health conditions



More people are likely to struggle to work in the wake of Covid-19

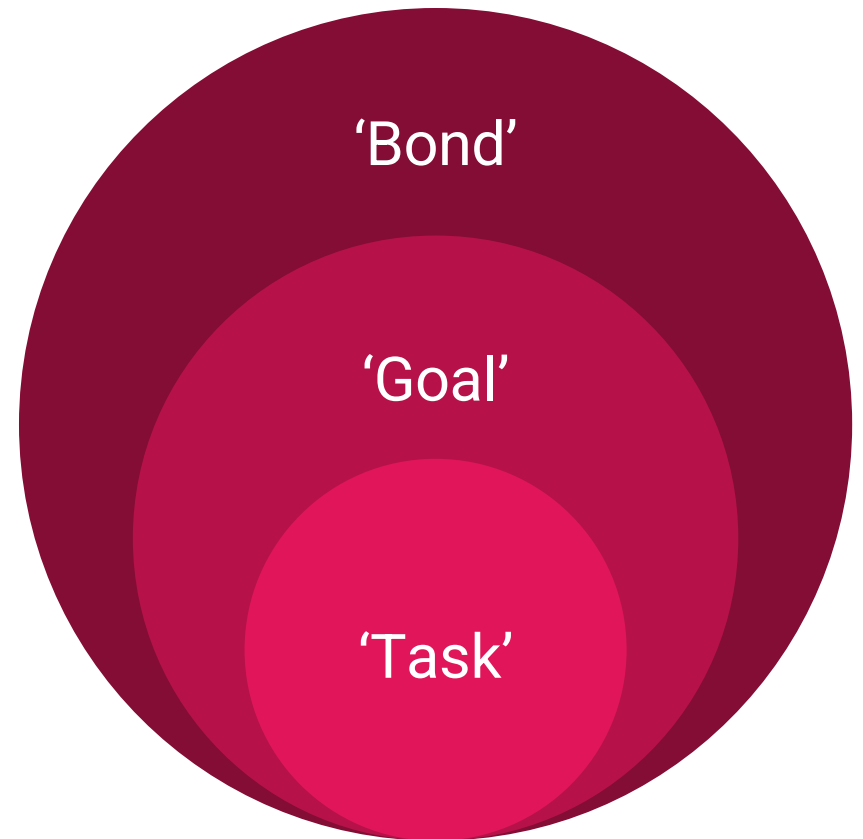


Only around 4% of people on these benefits move into employment each year

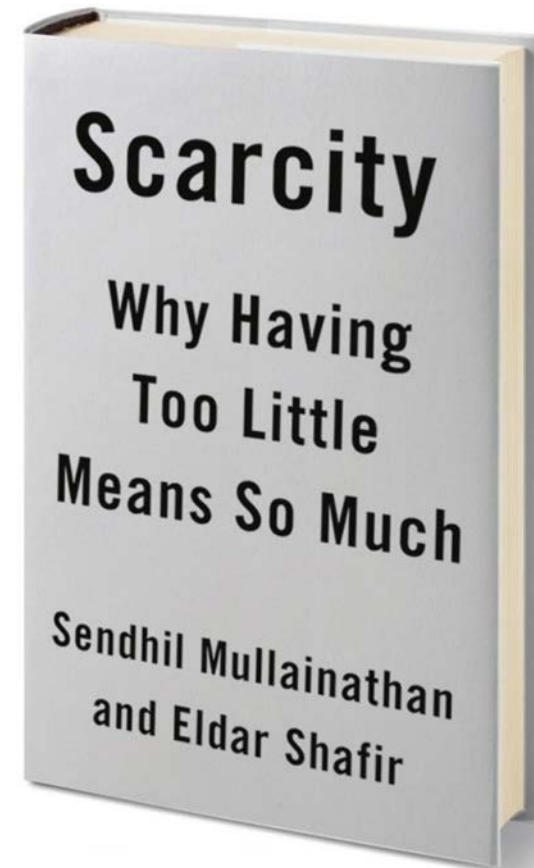


Many people report negative experiences of dealing with DWP

The essential ingredients of a helping relationship



The circumstances people need to achieve change



DWP can't effectively support people facing complex disadvantage



- People are seen primarily as 'benefit claimants' & their relationship with DWP has a fundamental power imbalance
- DWP is wedded to particular approaches & assumptions that narrow the scope of delivery
- Even if support was improved, the lack of trust in the system means people may not engage

Where we're starting from and where we need to go

Barriers within the DWP-led system	How a community-led approach would respond
Treating people as 'claimants'	Treating people as people
Assuming people need to be coerced to act	Starting with people's strengths
Deciding what steps people need to take	Empowering people to make their own choices
Support based on a fixed model	Support based on what people need
Change constrained by risk aversion	Change actively encouraged
An uphill battle to regain trust	Starting where trust already exists

New Local research: Strengths of existing local services



1. Providers build the type of relationships needed to help people move towards employment.

2. Providers and commissioners understand their local communities & ecosystems of support.



3. Local services work well together in partnership to meet people's needs.



4. Services work with local employers to proactively develop opportunities for employment.



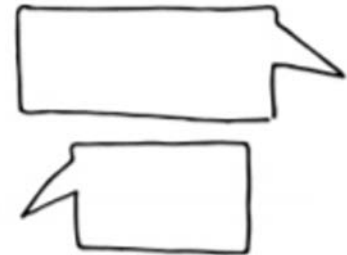
New Local research : Limitations of the existing model



1. Narrow & short-term contracts constrain the quality of services.
2. DWP commissioning favours larger national providers delivering more generic support.
3. Previous attempts at devolution have not allowed for sufficient local innovation.



4. Services and local ecosystems of support are severely under-resourced.
5. The current system creates barriers to effective joint working.
6. DWP practice and reputation undermines the ability of providers to support people.



Recommendations for national government

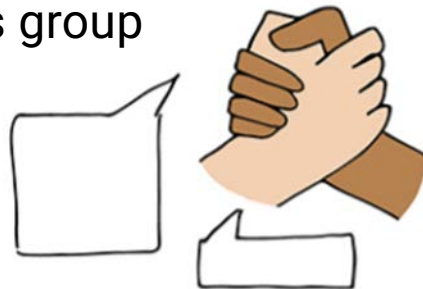
1) DWP should no longer be responsible for employment support for this group & should focus on providing financial security



2) Power and resources to support this group with employment should be shifted from Whitehall to local areas



3) Devolution should actively foster a more community-led approach to employment support for this group

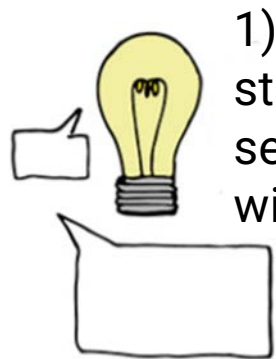


4) National economic & social policy should help foster a more inclusive economy



Recommendations for local areas

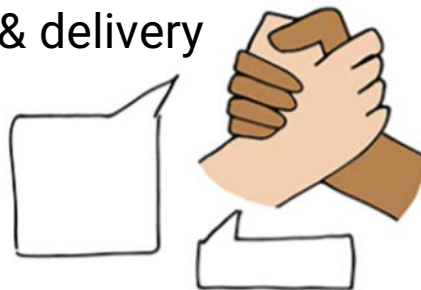
1) Develop a local strategy for support services in collaboration with the community

A thumbs-up icon, a glowing yellow lightbulb, and a white speech bubble with a black outline.

2) Embed employment as a cross-cutting objective within this strategy



3) Community participation, particularly among those facing complex disadvantage, should be actively facilitated throughout design & delivery



4) Funding & evaluation should promote holistic, collaborative, community-led support

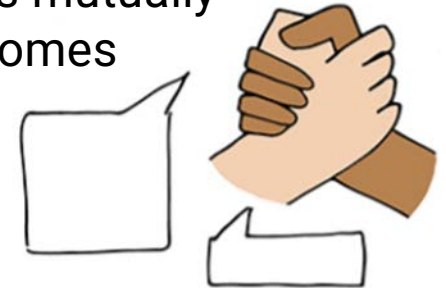


Recommendations for providers

1) More extensive co-design and delivery of services with the people who will use them



2) Closer collaboration with other local services working towards mutually supportive outcomes

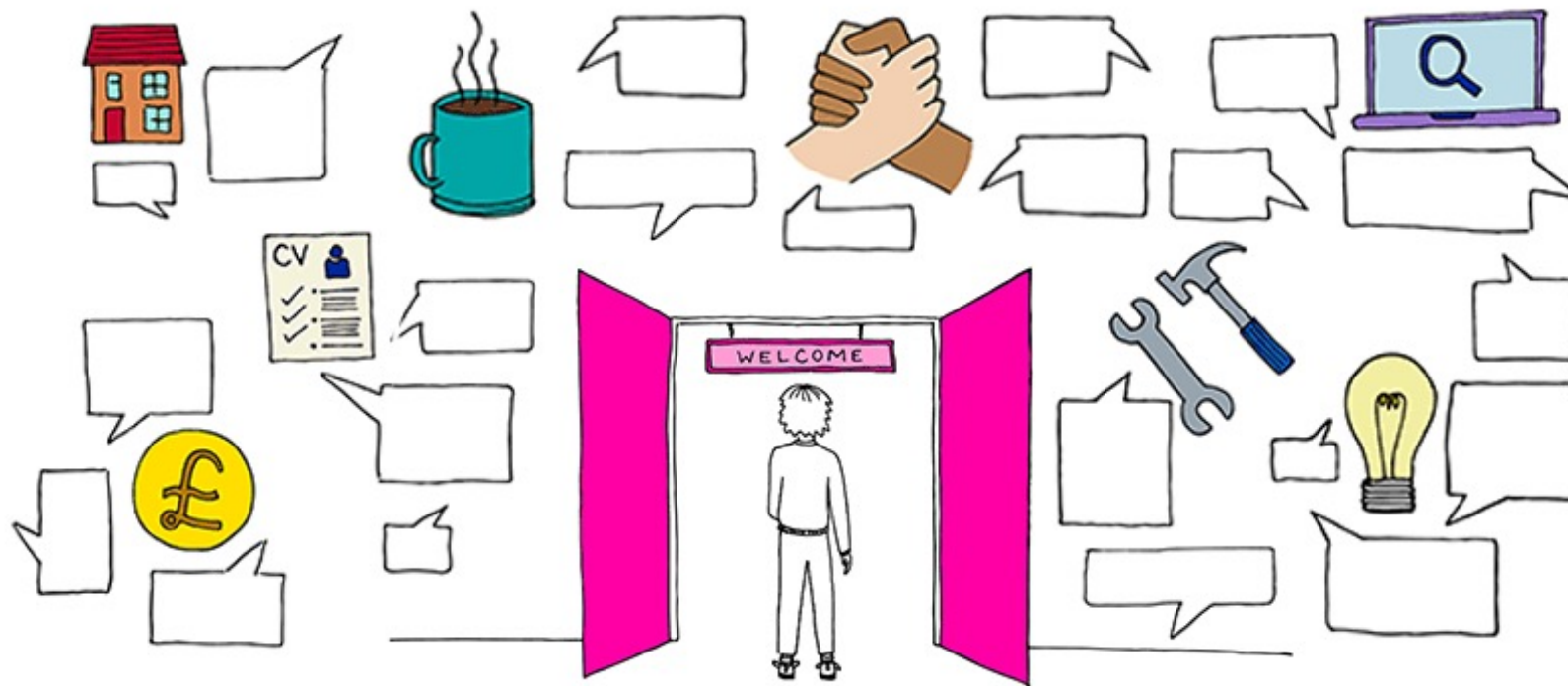


3) Push decision makers for more co-ordinated design and delivery of relevant services at a local level



4) Look to evaluate and demonstrate wider and collective impact, to make the case for change





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