



**Independent Evaluation of
Social Return on Investment for
The Amber Foundation**

September 2018

SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Amber Foundation is an independent charity with three residential centres working with unemployed and homeless young people to provide a temporary, safe place to build confidence and skills and find direction in life, securing long term employment and accommodation, and reducing the likelihood of re-offending. 'Amberteers' can stay as long as they need, with the average length of stay being six months. Over the last 23 years, it has supported approximately 3,000 young people.

The organisation has been capturing key outcome measures of employment, accommodation, re-offending and participants' relationships with family and friends since its inception and in recent years conducted a Theory of Change process, with level 1 verification by Project Oracle, and last year also introduced regular measurement based on the widely used Outcomes Star indicators. This report is the first independent analysis to assign a monetary value on the gains of the individuals as well as the state and wider society, as a result of the programme.

Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a framework developed by New Economics Foundation to help organisations understand, manage and communicate the social value that their activities create in a clear and consistent way, using established financial value data for each of the social and economic impacts generated by a programme and then calculates a ratio of input to return.

The principles of Social Return on Investment (SROI), and publically recognised monetised calculations, have been used by Bean Research to measure and put values on the outcomes generated by Amber Foundation for 98 participants who went through the Amber programme between 2014 and 2015, all of whom had previously offended; and compares the cost of running the programme to the estimated monetary value of the impact that it creates through improved health, well-being, employment, housing and offending outcomes.

In total, we found that the Amber Foundation programme, by supporting 98 young unemployed, homeless, ex-offender young people, generated **£15,245,171** in benefits to society. Based on inputs of £1,245,186, we can conclude that **for every £1 invested Amber Foundation generates £12.24 in social value over 3 years** through economic benefits, human capital gains, avoided Exchequer costs, as well as health and wellbeing improvements among programme participants.

Any SROI analysis tracks the distance travelled for the individuals involved, and those who the Amber Foundation support face multiple issues. For example, of the 98 Amberteers included in this analysis:

- 100% had previous convictions, with half (49%) having been in custody, at least once.
- 86% had a substance/drug issue, 51% had a problem with alcohol misuse.
- 46% had a drug AND alcohol misuse problem.
- 63% had a mental health issue.
- 39% had a dual diagnosis (mental health + substance misuse).
- 100% had no settled accommodation (compared to 12% of offenders nationally)

Impacts arising from participants moving into secure accommodation, employment or education, not re-offending create the most social value and public value through reduced costs to the Exchequer.

Collectively, there are also significant benefits to individuals as a result of changes in health, well-being, attitudes and behaviours, particularly in less drug and alcohol misuse; benefits of regular participation within the voluntary sector and in building skills and education.

All of these are underlying and contributing factors for both the ability of participants to gain and sustain employment, secure accommodation and the lower than expected levels of re-offending experienced.

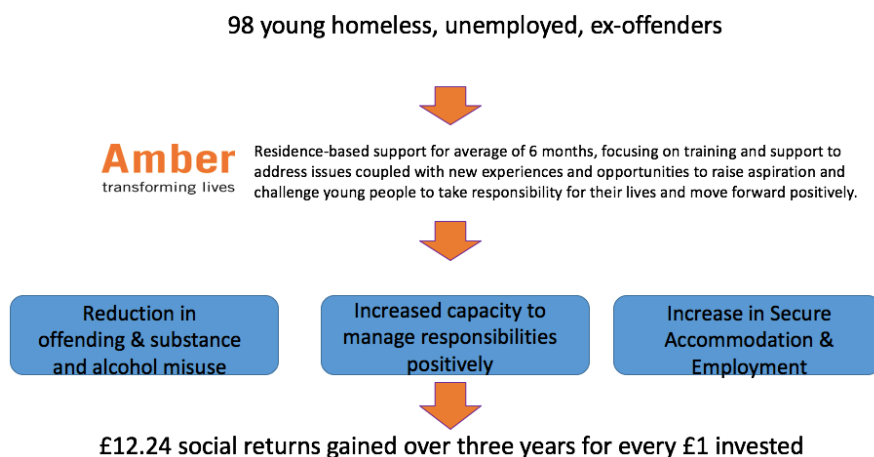
The end data analysis was based on outcomes measured by Amber Foundation among this particular cohort, as well as based on assumptions made from outcomes measured with similar but more recent cohorts. For example:

- Amber Foundation has a success rate of 75% or over for at least the last five years, with participants leaving to work, college or into sustainable secure accommodation.



- 57 of these 98 Amberteers have moved to employment, nearly four times higher than the 15% of ex-offenders nationally. 16 of these are parents.
- 25 of the 98 were reunited with family after previously reported breakdowns in relationships.
- Based on data from these 98, 24% of Amberteers with previous convictions have re-offended a year after release, compared to the rigorous MOJ Justice Data Lab control group showing 46% re-offending.
- The average cost of putting one participant through the Amber Foundation programme was £12,705, less than half the average annual overall cost of a prison place in England and Wales.
- All of the 98 participants entered secure accommodation, 23 were previously sleeping rough, the rest in temporary or emergency accommodation.
- Research among residents in 2017 showed that 95% of residents believe they have greater access to education skills and employment opportunities, 63% see an increase in confidence in independent living and 72% of residents reporting that Amber has provided a greater sense of purpose and well-being.
- Amber's Outcome Star measures introduced in 2018 show a significant shift in attitudes, behaviours and skills, such as 66% of participants seeing an improvement in their physical health, 75% a positive change in social networks and relationships, and 69% in their emotional and mental health.

In summary, the Social Return on Investment analysis shows that:



It should be noted that this analysis only includes the 98 ex-offender Amberteers from 2014-2015, and is cautious in its assessment of long term outcomes without post-residence tracking data. It is therefore likely that an analysis of all leavers in any year may generate a different annual social return, particularly more recent cohorts for whom further outcome measures have been measured.

The accompanying detailed report outlines each outcome and the resulting social and public monetary value placed, as well as assumptions made on data relevance, reliability, deadweight, attribution and annual drop-off.

This report and analysis was conducted by Bean Research Ltd in Autumn 2018 and is authored by Charlotte Turner, Director, Bean Research Ltd and member of Social Value UK. While the report was commissioned by the trustees of the Amber Foundation, and the results are based on outcome data supplied by Amber, the organisation has played no part in the summary analysis, nor in the full report's conclusions.

