

Supporting Young People Through Effective Partnerships

Evidence from theory and practice

The three key components



**Developing the
partnership**



**Managing the
partnership**



**Engaging young
people**

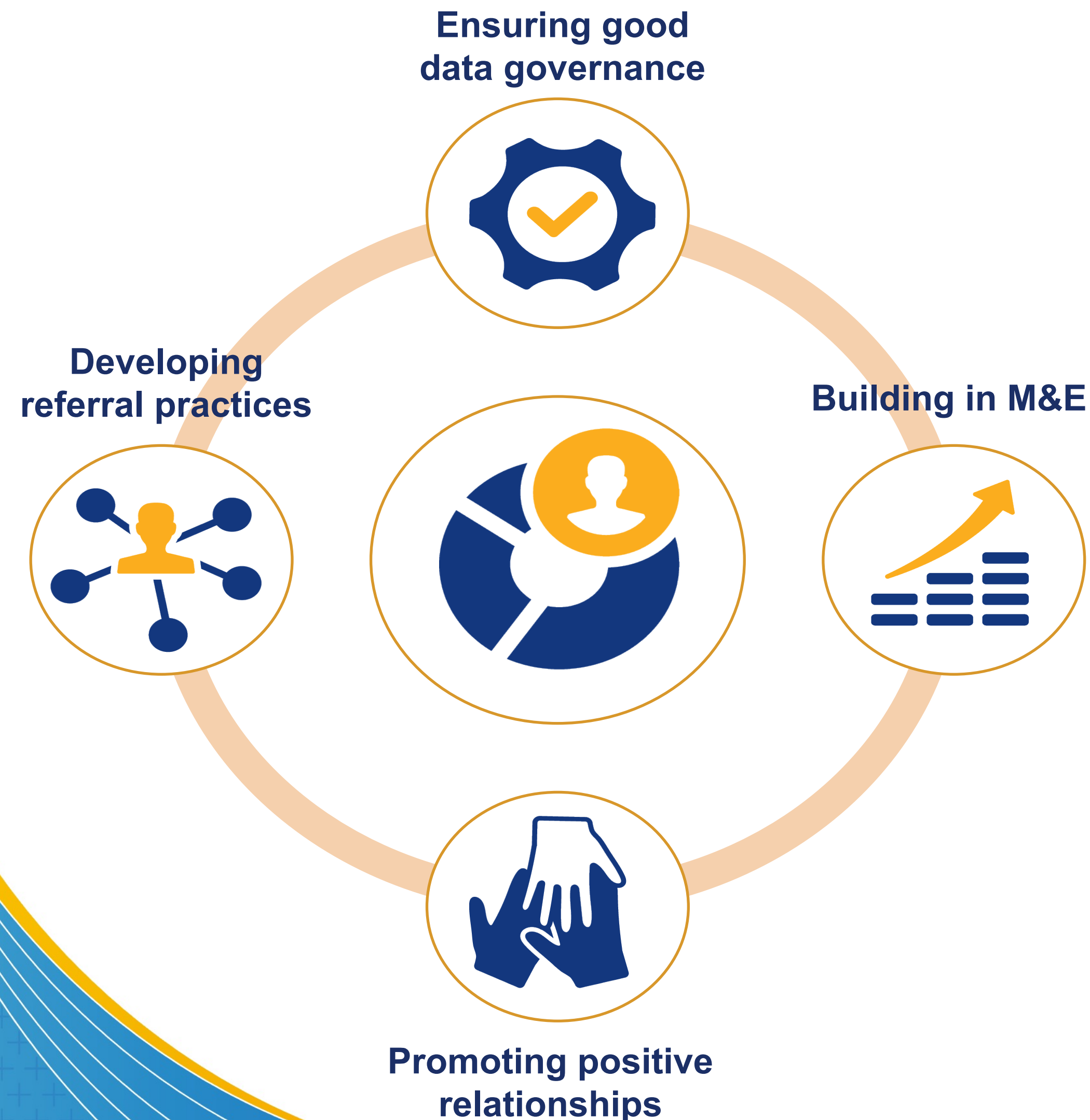
Developing the partnership



Principles in action

- **Youth Employment Initiative** – strong collaborative work at point of bidding
- **Engage Project** – working with partners to improve outreach in schools
- **Youth Employment Gateway** – joint approach with JCP, LA departments, local providers to improve referrals and provision
- **Talent Match** – young people included as partners during design and delivery stages
- **Getting Ahead** – core partners with strong community presence, knowledge of the local labour market, and links to employers

Managing the partnership



Principles in action

- **Youth Employment Gateway**– co-location with JCP, joint workshops, group information sessions, to promote warm referrals
- **Glasgow Youth Employability Partnership**– single shared management information system and city-wide data hubs in partnership with SDS
- **Developing the Young Workforce** – dedicated team monitoring data across all regional groups and reporting progress to Scottish Government
- **Activity Agreement Pilots** – referrals encouraged through ‘win win’ approach

Engaging young people



Principles in action

- **MyGo** – shared branding, staff, and social events, three-way initial client registration meeting, and buddying system
- **SIEL Project** – support journeys co-developed with young person and at their own pace
- **Engage** – collaboration with Communities First, service supporting vulnerable people in the community, to improve referral rate
- **Talent Match** – in-work support provided through key worker or employer engagement team

The 'What Works' resources

DEVELOPING REFERRAL PRACTICES

WHAT IS IT? Partnerships investing in relationship-building with referral partners early on, sustaining engagement, ensuring there is shared understanding and sharing of information.

WHY DOES IT MATTER? It is key to the successful functioning of the partnership and to minimise risks of poor buy-in or uptake, and of wrong referrals.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS? It expands the reach of the intervention and streamlines delivery, supporting uptake and achievement of targets.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN PRACTICE?

- Invest time to build trust between delivery partners and referral agencies and engage in the process early on, to ensure referrers are bought into the service once delivery starts.
- Put yourself in the referrer's shoes – why should they refer young people to the service? What information do they need to do this effectively? What is in it for them?
- Improve awareness of the services provided by each delivery partner, through leaflets and information events bringing together all potential referrers.
- Maintain regular contact with referral agencies and develop a shared agenda from the outset.
- Build on what has worked in the past, further strengthening links to previous referral partners.
- Ensure that referrals are followed up promptly, and that there is clear communication about who is doing what, and what happens next.
- Ensure there is sequencing and joining up of support with referral agencies, and that they have clear guidance and a key point of contact when referring young people.
- Ensure all partners maintain an updated database of young people engaging in the service, allowing the journey and outcome of the referral to be tracked across the partnership.
- Identify poor referral practice (eg. low or wrong referrals) and address it early on, improving communication with referral agencies or checking in more frequently.

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION CORNER OUTREACH BOX 6: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT GATEWAY

As the main referral partner for the YEG (see Box 3), engagement and coordination with JCP was a key aspect of the intervention. To strengthen relationships, YEG staff worked from JCP offices on agreed days, to enable discussion with Work Coaches on programme eligibility and participant progress frequently and face to face. They also held joint workshops and group information sessions to develop shared knowledge on their services.

A key achievement was to implement a shared database which allowed YEG staff to know when young claimants met their eight-week eligibility criteria to enter the programme. These practices progressively improved referral conversion rates as the intervention progressed and contributed to the YEG exceeding its target for starts in Phase 1 by 50 per cent.

Liverpool City Region Youth Employment Gateway (YEG)

What is it?

The Youth Employment Gateway (YEG) was a £5.9 million programme delivered by Liverpool City Region (LCR) between November 2014 and 2017 aimed at reducing youth unemployment in the region. The programme was targeted at young people aged 18-24 who had been claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or Universal Credit (UC) for between eight weeks and nine months. The YEG was designed and delivered collaboratively by the six local authorities in LCR, from bidding for funding through to delivery via the YEG Steering and Operations groups.

What did it do?

The core element to the YEG was the tailored one-to-one employment support for young people led by a YEG advisor, which was enhanced by a range of other in-house and external support delivered in partnership with external providers. This ranged from YEG advisors working closely with employer engagement teams on job matching, to building links with a wide range of local support services, and strengthening communication with Jobcentre Plus (JCP), the main referral partner, to ensure support was coordinated.

A number of key activities to the collaborative approach included joint ventures with JCP, such as courses for employability and IT, daily updates with employer engagement teams on vacancies and job matching, and joint work with council departments (homeless units, debt advisors, council tax officers, Troubled Families teams, etc.) to provide wrap-around support to participants with more complex needs.

In some instances YEG advisors worked with external partners to develop provision which wasn't previously available, including a mental health and wellbeing course in partnership with a college, and additional sector-based training with the council's adult learning service. Through close links with external providers, particularly counselling and health services, the YEG was also able to reach young people with more complex needs who were not ready to join the programme yet and needed additional support to enable them to participate.

What was the impact?

The programme was delivered in two phases. By December 2016, the Phase 1 programme targets for starts, job outcomes and sustained outcomes had all been exceeded, including 829 participants moving into work against a target of 590 and 439 participants achieving a 26-week job outcome against a target of 413. By September 2017, the Phase 2 target for starts had been achieved, the target for job starts almost achieved (98 per cent), and the target for sustained job outcomes stood at 59 per cent. The lower performance in Phase 2, compared to Phase 1, is partly linked to higher targets in Phase 2, and shorter timeframe compared to Phase 1.



What worked well?

- The **wrap-around support** provided through joint working with external providers, which was viewed as one of the most valuable types of support by young people.
- Co-location** of YEG advisors in JCP offices on particular days and times, strengthening links between YEG and JCP, and improving referral processes. In this way, YEG and JCP advisors could discuss programme eligibility and participant progress frequently and face to face, which encouraged JCP referrals.
- Joint workshops** between YEG and JCP staff during Phase 1, which improved relations, communication and understanding and led to improved conversion rate of referrals to programme starts in Phase 2.
- Information circulation**, whereby YEG staff delivered group information sessions at JCP, distributed leaflets and organised regular meetings to discuss the programme and respond to queries from JCP staff.
- Effective referral practices** between YEG and JCP, including maintaining a database of all new claimants and when their eight-week eligibility criteria would be met, and JCP advisors discussing pre-referral of young people to YEG after five weeks of a claim, allowing YEG providers to identify potential participants early on.

TOOLBOX

Additional resources

- Journey to Employment Framework.** This NPC framework provides practical guidance to help organisations measure young people's journey to employment. It includes a guide to understanding the factors that support young people to get and sustain a job, an evidence-based framework on seven groups of factors that contribute to successful job outcomes, and a suite of tools to measure impact.
- Evaluation Toolkit For Youth Guarantee Projects.** This European Commission toolkit was designed to support partners delivering Youth Guarantee interventions in evaluating the impact of their programmes. It includes guidance on deciding which type of evaluation is right for the intervention, planning and conducting the evaluation, and reporting results.
- Impact measurement in the NEETs sector.** This NPC guide is aimed at organisations working with NEET young people to help them measure and communicate their impact. It focuses on four practical aspects to improving measurement and how to develop consensus across partners around the outcomes they want to achieve.
- PHF Assessing Impact Framework.** This Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) framework provides a guide for partnerships looking to understand how the funding they receive creates impact, using a practical framework of indicators focused on individuals and communities, organisations, and practice and policy.

	CHECK YOUR PROGRESS	NOT STARTED	IN PROGRESS	COMPLETE
EFFECTIVE REFERRAL PRACTICES	The partnership has identified referral partners and agreed a shared approach to engagement.	●	●	●
	Partners agreed on and assigned resources to relationship-building and developing processes with referral partners (regular engagement, information sharing, joint activities, etc.).	●	●	●
	Partners have established clear communication lines between referrers and delivery partners.	●	●	●
	Partners have established an integrated and coherent referral pathway to ensure warm referrals and continuity of support.	●	●	●
GOOD DATA COVERAGE	Referrers have access to data tracking systems, are using these correctly, and partners have access to this data.	●	●	●
	Data sharing processes and protocols have been agreed across the partnership.	●	●	●
	Shared performance metrics, monitoring frameworks, and quality standards have been agreed across the partnership.	●	●	●
POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS	All partners are clear about their data monitoring and data sharing responsibilities.	●	●	●
	There is buy-in across all partners to monitor and share data as needed and resources have been assigned to these activities.	●	●	●
	There is connection, coordination, and communication between the strategic and operational levels of the partnership.	●	●	●
	Open and inclusive dialogue is maintained across the partnership through established mechanisms.	●	●	●
	There are sufficient learning and sharing opportunities across the partnership.	●	●	●