

JUST Lincolnshire Social Return on Investment Report

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Introduction

This report has been drawn up for JUST Lincolnshire and covers 8 years of their activity. It examines the social impacts of JUST Lincolnshire across four of their main programmes of activity – young ambassadors, school workshops, DEI in the workplace, and activities aimed at reducing hate crime.

The report will start with an examination of stakeholders and value offer for JUST Lincolnshire. It will look at both intended and unintended consequences of the activities of the organisation, the duration of impacts, and the ways in which those impacts synergize with each other.

The next section of the report will be a social return on investment evaluation. Drawing on quantitative data from JUST Lincolnshire and qualitative data collected through interviews with stakeholders, the report will produce social impact values.

The report will end with some recommendations based on feedback from JUST Lincolnshire stakeholders about how the work may be improved upon in the future, and how the company may be able to improve their data gathering practices to obtain better results in the future.

Methodology

Social Return on Investment is an evaluative methodology that aims to answer the following questions regarding an intervention, a social project, or any other activity that has an impact on its surrounding community:

1. Who changes?
2. In what way do they change?
3. How do we know they have changed?
4. Which changes are valued the most?
5. How much of the change was due to the intervention/project/activity?

The Social Return on Investment model is not meant to replace other methods of evaluation and data gathering; it is not meant to place exact financial figures on an outcome; and it is not about imposing a pre-determined view of what value is on a group of stakeholders.

The principles of Social Value are “to increase equality, improve wellbeing, and increase environmental sustainability”. It is a way to provide a fuller picture of return on investment, not a replacement for accounting or financial audit.

All qualitative data used for this evaluation was gathered by LORIC from interviews with stakeholders, conducted in May 2022. LORIC sought to get qualitative feedback from at least 10% of all JUST Lincolnshire beneficiary organisations, including schools, the LCC Prevent lead, members of organisations that received DEI in the workplace training, and Young Ambassadors.

All quantitative data used for this evaluation was gathered by JUST Lincolnshire as part of their reporting.

The data used in this report covers an 8-year timeframe.

Stakeholders and Value offer

JUST Lincolnshire's value offer is described as delivering knowledge and skills to promote JUSTice across various groups that are relevant to the local community.

The charitable objectives of JUST Lincolnshire include but are not limited to:

- The elimination of all forms of discrimination
- Advancing education and raising awareness inequality and diversity
- Promoting activities to foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds
- Conducting or commissioning research on equality and diversity issues and publishing results to the public
- Cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity

JUST Lincolnshire provides value not JUST for the companies that commission their services, but to underserved populations, the wider community, and various other services. Their value offer includes, but is not limited to:

1. Expert support through local knowledge, delivering an excellent learning service tailored to the needs of the individual stakeholder. They achieve this through active listening and expert storytelling, and the delivery of services aimed at boosting confidence with difficult subjects. Willingness to learn, attention to detail, transparency, trustworthy, and honesty are some of the key values that they bring to this part of their work.
2. Support for under-served populations through the amplification of their voices, partnership with relevant organisations, and the creation of stable communities. Their work is aimed at creating long-term change which benefits all, not JUST the few.
3. Kick-starting cultural change within individual organisations by enabling individuals to have difficult conversations. They achieve this by holding space for those difficult conversations to take place, while providing empathy and support to all attendees. Flexibility, openness, persistence, and mediation skills are some of the tools employed by JUST Lincolnshire to help raise people up so that they, in turn, may raise to the challenge.
4. Becoming a valued partner by signposting, collective referrals and follow-ups, and co-ordination of effort. Because of their placement within the community, JUST
5. Lincolnshire have an overview not JUST of what is happening at present but also what could happen in the future. This was especially true during lockdown where they became a point of connection for other companies.

JUST Lincolnshire serves a number of individual stakeholders, including but not limited to private companies, local government, funders, and individual beneficiary groups. On a more granular level, this could include councils, Big lottery, ambassadors, faith groups, the NHS, health authorities, community groups, learning centres, teachers, schools, scouts, police, universities, the Co-Op, the YMCA, victims of hate crime and their families, as well as the wider community.

At the core of JUST Lincolnshire's activities is the principle that a rising tide lifts all boats – meaning that positive changes for under-served groups will have a positive ripple effect to everyone, creating a more JUST, better-served society. They achieve this through their abovementioned activities, bringing value across the county through their bespoke services.

During the first tranche of talks, JUST Lincolnshire were able to identify seven specific stakeholder groups they wanted to explore in more detail, broadly grouped under the umbrellas of the Prisons, Learning Centres, and the Lincolnshire County Council.

For Prisons, the intended consequences of engaging with JUST Lincolnshire focused on meeting their statutory obligations, while also providing reassurance, independent advice and consultancy to staff for dealing with questions and issues that staff members might not otherwise be comfortable addressing. An added value aspect of the work involved confidence, trust building between staff and residents, making of connections, introducing new ways of working, and cultural change in the long term.

However, as with every other new impact, there are also unintended negative consequences, most often in terms of IT issues, identifying unnecessary barriers and frustration. Expectations-management is also identified as a challenge, as working with JUST Lincolnshire can also unearth unpleasant attitudes, prejudice, and groupthink. Many of the more long-term positive changes cannot come until a short-term amount of “pain” is endured as the stakeholder identifies and addresses systemic issues that might come up during the training.

For Learning Centres like scouts, schools, and universities, the main intended consequences revolve around imparting knowledge, life skills, and increasing confidence. For schools, this also includes statutory obligations as life skills are part of the national curriculum. However, added value comes in the form of significant transferable skills, particularly around learning about people that are not like you and opening the door for conversations. Often there is a ripple effect on the wider community as students are given the skills to challenge what might be a prevailing narrative at home. For many, the classroom may be the first place where they are shown attitudes different to those of their parents.

At the same time, some of the unintended negative consequences associated with JUST Lincolnshire’s training in learning centres could also take the form of students and parents pushing back against the new knowledge. This is particularly true in cases where the rest of the community is not on board with the longer-term changes that might come from JUST Lincolnshire’s involvement, thus turning the learning into a box-ticking exercise. For older students, there is also the discomfort of having to challenge deeply held beliefs and views that might cause them to struggle with engaging with the material.

For the Lincolnshire County Council, some of the biggest intended consequences of working with JUST Lincolnshire revolve around awareness raising around vulnerabilities. There are the statutory obligations and strategic priorities that all local government has to face, but above that, the added value is the knock-on effect on the wider community. Better-informed, empathetic, and kinder services often lead to better support and more trust with constituents. Furthermore, diagnosing problems early gives the council the ability to be proactive rather than reactive, regardless of whether these are the specialist adult services, children’s services, education, or public health and wellbeing. Indeed, by working with so many departments, JUST Lincolnshire has an overview of the wider service and shared challenges that might be difficult to perceive on a departmental level.

Having said that, some of the observed unintended negative consequences could be resistance, conflict of priorities, unearthing systemic ignorance, frustration when things don’t change fast enough, and pushback against change. Pushback can take many forms, from toxic positivity (“good vibes only”) to disengagement (“been there, done that, nothing ever changes”). On a more practical level, some of the changes that JUST Lincolnshire can propose are not possible because of capacity and resource limitation. As with other stakeholders, the management of expectations is a challenge.

Naturally, for the individuals who benefit from JUST Lincolnshire's work, the skills, contacts, resources, and confidence that are gained through the work is invaluable, and JUST Lincolnshire observe that for many of them, these new interpersonal skills also lead to an improvement of the overall quality of life. What is challenging for individuals (such as those working on the ambassador programme) is that sometimes their new knowledge and skills puts them at odds with family members, leading to fallout and even feelings of unsafety.

It is also worth noting that JUST Lincolnshire themselves are a work in progress, and that through their work with others are constantly learning, gaining new knowledge, and expanding their horizons. For them, working with new groups often leads to personal growth and development for staff. However, there is also the responsibility that comes from this continued learning and knowledge, as JUST Lincolnshire's first responsibility is always to the learners. Managing expectations and maintaining a safe environment for all learners is a challenge, especially in adversarial situations where a person might be moved to trauma-dump in a group setting.

Impacts and Proxy values

Using the data gathered from qualitative interviews, as well as quantitative data gathered from JUST Lincolnshire as part of their evaluation activities, the following impacts were identified to be measured as part of this evaluation:

1. **School workshops:** Delivered by JUST Lincolnshire, these school workshops aimed to increase young people's knowledge of issues pertaining to JUSTice and inclusion, and increasing their resilience. It was the part of the JUST Lincolnshire service offer that schoolteachers mentioned the most during interviews and the one they had the most feedback on.
2. **Young ambassadors:** Delivered by JUST Lincolnshire, the program aims to give useful skills to young people, increase their resilience, and improve their mental wellbeing. It was the second most cited by schoolteachers during interviews and the one they gave a lot of feedback on.
3. **DEI at the workplace:** Delivered by JUST Lincolnshire, the program aims to improve working practices by bringing more knowledge and training about Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion into workplaces. The program was cited most often by employers who took part in the interview, and they testified that it improved employee morale and productivity significantly.
4. **Activities aimed to reduce hate crime:** These activities range from modules on the Young Ambassadors' programme to other additional support while delivering DEI at the workplace. The impacts of these activities could range from the prevention of non-violent crime to the prevention of violence with significant injury, but for the purposes of this report, only proxy values connected to non-violent crime were included.

Using the data provided, impacts were assigned to each program, with corresponding proxy values selected by JUST Lincolnshire.¹ More detailed breakdown of each proxy value is included in Appendix 1 (workings), but to give one example of the workings, let's take DEI at the workplace:

As demonstrated by the testimonies of stakeholders, the delivery of Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion learning and training in the workplace improves working conditions for all employees, and not JUST the ones taking the training. The changes that occurred as a result of JUST Lincolnshire's interventions, as described by interviewees, included but were not limited to:

¹ Proxy Values: a variable used to measure social impact using other known interventions that might produce a comparable result. In the case of this evaluation, proxy values were selected from several possible proxies.

- Training at senior level to address questions of Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion;
- Introduction of a DEI champion on the board of Trustees;
- Several changes to HR processes, including improvements to the whistleblowing process;
- Several changes that improved knowledge and morale in the workplace;

Business and management research assigns different values to employee morale and turnover, but it is widely agreed that high turnover of employees and low morale are associated with poor productivity and under-utilisation of resources. As such, some of the proxy values assigned to the workplace DEI training that JUST Lincolnshire delivers are improvement of employee mental health and team morale²; decreasing of employee turnover³; and decreasing the costs of onboarding⁴.

Of course, it is not possible for JUST Lincolnshire to take credit for all the positive impacts of their work. Over the course of the interview, participants were also asked if they believed they would have gotten the same good results if they continued as they were; if they got support from any other similar organisations at the same time as they did JUST Lincolnshire; if there was something they didn't get from the training; and how long they believe they believe the positive impacts would last.

Participants were positive on the whole about the benefits and uniqueness of JUST Lincolnshire, but they were also realistic in terms of the size of the problem. Most companies that engaged JUST Lincolnshire to provide DEI training are aware they are dealing with systemic issues that require significant time and sustained effort to tackle; they believed there was a lot of work necessary to develop those changes; and they acknowledged that some of their employees might have been able to access some of that information on their own steam. For that reason, only 10% of the potential impacts are attributable to JUST Lincolnshire in this report.

Even with that in mind, however, DEI at the workplace activities had some of the highest return on investment when considering the time, effort, and known impact (a minimum of £3,897,196.10 for the 8 years the project has been running)

The school workshops and Young Ambassador Programme were assessed using similar methodologies. Participants were asked about the impacts, both intended and unintended, of JUST Lincolnshire's activities; they were asked about the ways in which their organisations and their personal practices were changed because of JUST Lincolnshire's activities; and they were asked to consider what other sources of training they might have been able to access; and they were asked to consider how long the impact of the training would last for them.

Most of the participants felt that they would not have gotten the same level of training without JUST Lincolnshire. An examination of comparable training and support in the county reveals there aren't many other companies offering the exact same training and support, although the argument can be made that engagement with other charities and CICs may result in similar outcomes (increased self-efficacy, increased confidence, greater resilience, greater sense of belonging to a community, etc.) For this reason, the applicable percentage of the impact of the Young Ambassador programme and the School Workshop programme is also 10%. The two activities have a combined social impact of a minimum £59,625.85 for the 8 years the programme has been running.

However, it is the activities aimed at hate crime reduction that had the second biggest impact of all the activities delivered by JUST Lincolnshire, as crime – both violent and non-violent – can have significant impacts not JUST on the victims and bystanders, but on society. A report produced by the

² Prevention of work-related stress and depression and their associated costs, as valued by the NHS.

³ Prevention of recruitment costs, broadly measured here as 10% of average Lincolnshire salary as presented by NOMIS.

⁴ Prevention of productivity drop when new person starts, measured here as 50% drop in productivity over the first 15 weeks.

Home Office in 2018 estimates that the impact on victims of non-violent hate crime starts at £6,360.00 per person, per case, and can only go up from there. In this light, all activities aimed at reducing hate crime, empowering victims, and empowering communities have a massive social return on investment.

Having said that, data on the prevalence and severity of hate crime is limited, especially on a regional level. It is difficult to estimate, from the data available, what the full impact of JUST Lincolnshire's activities was on hate crime in the county. However, even using the same methodology as other activities and assuming that 10% of possible impacts are due to JUST Lincolnshire, activities aimed at reducing hate crime have a combined minimum impact of £670,755.00.

Altogether, the activities of JUST Lincolnshire over the 8 years of measured activity have a combined social impact of a minimum £4,627,576.95. Divided by the expenditure for those 8 years (£782,304.00) that gives a minimum Social Return on Investment of £5.92.

Limitations of approach

Social Return on Investment can produce impressive results, but it is ultimately only one facet of a bigger story. Each of JUST Lincolnshire's beneficiaries has experienced a powerful impact from their activities, even if that impact cannot easily be assigned a clear proxy value. Stories shared with JUST Lincolnshire staff show that, for many of their beneficiaries, a facilitated workshop or training was the first opportunity they had to explore a hitherto forbidden subject, or to share a part of themselves that they had previously kept hidden away. Such stories deserve to be acknowledged and appreciated even if they cannot be assigned a proxy value or a monetary amount.

Equally, it is worth noting that some of the metrics used to assess social impact concern hypothetical future events. Especially with cases such as hate crime, it is difficult to state with a 100% certainty if hate crime was prevented because of an intervention, which is why so many of the proxy values and valid percentages used in this report are so conservative in their estimations. By that same token, it is worth noting that the impacts of JUST Lincolnshire could be a lot greater, particularly when it comes to hate crime reduction. According to the Home Office, the cost of violent crime on the victim is estimated at over £20,000 per person per case; the cost to an employer is estimated at over £2,000 per person per case; and the cost of investigation and prosecution of violent crime starts at £2,050 per case. All those costs can go up, depending on whether any other offences occur concurrently, and it is worth noting that hate crimes can escalate quickly.

In other words, while some of the estimated social impacts in this report concern themselves with preventing hypothetical harm, it is worth noting that the potential cost of hate crime on victims, employers, and society, are both considerable and difficult to repair.

The timeframe used in this report is also noteworthy. As stated previously, the report examines data across an 8-year period, which includes periods of time before COVID-19, during the COVID-19 lockdown, and after the COVID-19 lockdown. As such, the Social Return is different year-on-year than it is on average – during 2020-2021, JUST Lincolnshire delivered fewer workshops, fewer interventions, and fewer activities than they might have in previous year. That doesn't mean their impacts are any less meaningful, but it was agreed that it would not have been fair to limit this analysis to one or two years.

Finally, it is worth noting that Social Return on Investment is not meant to replace traditional accounting or evaluation methods. Rather, it adds dimension to evaluations, and increases the ability

of stakeholders to devise meaningful interventions by gathering useful data and targeting their efforts where they are most needed.

Conclusions

Through its activities, JUST Lincolnshire delivers a wide range of social impacts to their local community. From individual impacts, like increasing the self-efficacy and resilience of young people in their Young Ambassadors' programme, to community level impacts through their hate crime reduction interventions, the organization has delivered a wide range of impacts across many different levels. Currently, the demonstrable return per pound invested starts at £5.92 – however, it is possible that, through more concerted data gathering and targeted intervention design, that impact is likely to increase significantly over the coming years.

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Appendix 1: Workings

Programme	Impact Measure	Proxy Value	Numerical Unit	Valid %	Number of units	Total
School workshops	Increasing children's awareness to diversity and inclusion. Increasing children's resilience.	Other Therapist, Child, Group	£89.36	10%	3,593.00	£32,107.79
DEI at the workplace	Improved working conditions.	Prevention of associated cost of treating a mood affective disorder by the NHS (for example, depression)	£1,282.48	10%	2,808.00	£360,119.20
DEI at the workplace	Improved working conditions.	Prevention of associated cost of treating a stress-related disorder by the NHS	£928.37	10%	2,808.00	£260,685.18
DEI at the workplace	Improved working conditions.	Other Therapist, Adult, Group	£57.04	10%	2,808.00	£16,015.72
DEI at the workplace	Improved working conditions.	Other Therapist, Adult, One to One	£87.53	10%	2,808.00	£24,577.20
DEI at the workplace	Improved working conditions.	Average cost of recruitment (10% of median Lincolnshire salary)	£2,900.00	10%	2,808.00	£814,320.00
DEI at the workplace	Improved working conditions.	Average cost of onboarding (15 weeks during which the person is not at 100% productivity)	£8,623.50	10%	2,808.00	£2,421,478.80

Young Ambassadors	Activities aimed at improving social conditions for young ambassadors.	Other Therapist, Child, One to One	£138.62	10%	569.00	£7,887.56
Young Ambassadors	Activities aimed at improving social conditions for young ambassadors.	Single GP appointment	£30.00	10%	569.00	£1,707.00
Young Ambassadors	Activities aimed at improving social conditions for young ambassadors.	Specialist mental health services	£315.00	10%	569.00	£17,923.50
Hate Crime Reduction	Activities aimed at the reduction of hate crime	Prevention of cost of emotional harm from crime: fear	£2,540.00	10%	1,383.00	£351,282.00
Hate Crime Reduction	Activities aimed at the reduction of hate crime	Prevention of cost of emotional harm from non-violent crime: depression	£1,640.00	10%	1,383.00	£226,812.00
Hate Crime Reduction	Activities aimed at the reduction of hate crime	Prevention of lost productivity as a result of crime: violence without injury	£670.00	10%	1,383.00	£92,661.00
					Total impact:	£4,627,576.95
					Total expenditure:	£782,304.00
					SROI:	5.92