Resettlement Employability Project

www.hastings.gov.uk

NOVEMBER 2026

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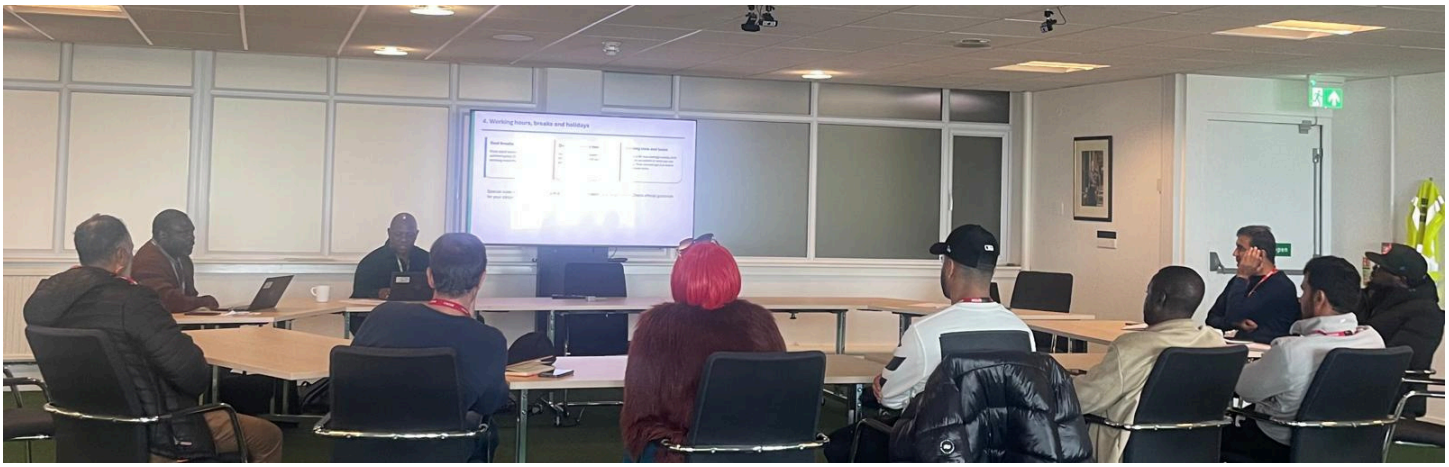
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the 3rd edition of the Resettlement Employability Programme (REP) Team newsletter! As we enter a busy season for employment and hiring, the REP team has been actively equipping our clients with the tools they need to succeed. Alongside our regular one-to-one guidance, we've recently delivered a series of interactive workshops tailored to seasonal job opportunities, interview preparation, and skill-building. Read on to discover how our clients are making progress, how our community partnerships are growing, and what's next for the programme.



Empowering Our Clients

Workshop on Employment rights and Modern Day Slavery - Hastings October 26

Many of our clients have limited awareness of their employment rights, leaving them at risk of exploitation, unfair treatment and modern slavery. Fear of losing their jobs or jeopardising their immigration status can often prevent individuals from speaking out or challenging unacceptable working conditions.

Recognising the importance of addressing this vulnerability, the REP team organised and delivered two targeted workshops in Hastings and Eastbourne, focusing on Employment Rights and Modern Slavery Awareness.

The sessions provided participants with valuable information about their legal rights, workplace protections, and the standards employers are required to uphold in the UK. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing appreciation for the opportunity to improve their understanding, build confidence and feel better equipped to recognise and address workplace exploitation. It is our aim to ensure that we will have an informed workforce in the future that will be better equipped to recognise the signs of exploitation and abuse of their rights at the workplace.

What Our Participants Said

Feedback from both workshops was overwhelmingly positive, with participants describing the sessions as highly interactive, informative and genuinely eye-opening. Attendees highlighted how the training deepened their understanding of the seriousness and realities of modern slavery, while equipping them with the knowledge and confidence to recognise, challenge and report potential workplace exploitation. One of the most valuable aspects of the workshops was the practical guidance shared, particularly the importance of carefully reading, understanding and seeking clarification on employment contracts before signing them. Participants recognised how this knowledge could help them make informed employment decisions, protect their rights and avoid potential exploitation in the workplace.

Planned Workshops

- Interview Skills and Confidence – practical mock interviews with feedback.
- Understanding the UK Job Market – particularly local vacancies and skills shortages.
- Employment Rights and Modern Slavery Awareness – protecting clients from exploitation.
- Digital Skills and AI for Jobseekers – improving access to modern recruitment processes.
- Sector-Specific Employer Workshops – bringing employers into sessions to explain vacancies, expectations and recruitment pathways.

We would like to move beyond delivering workshops as standalone training sessions. To developing an integrated REP Employability Academy, combining group workshops, practical exercises, employer engagement, individual coaching and follow-up support. This would create a structured pathway from initial engagement through to training, job readiness and employment. It is evident that the future is to ensure sustainable employment so that there is a lower attrition rate at the workplace. This will also support East Sussex County council and Hasting borough council aim of alleviating poverty and reduction of reliance on unemployment benefits amongst the resettled communities.

Key Impact | July – October

13
Work Outcomes
into stable, ethical employment

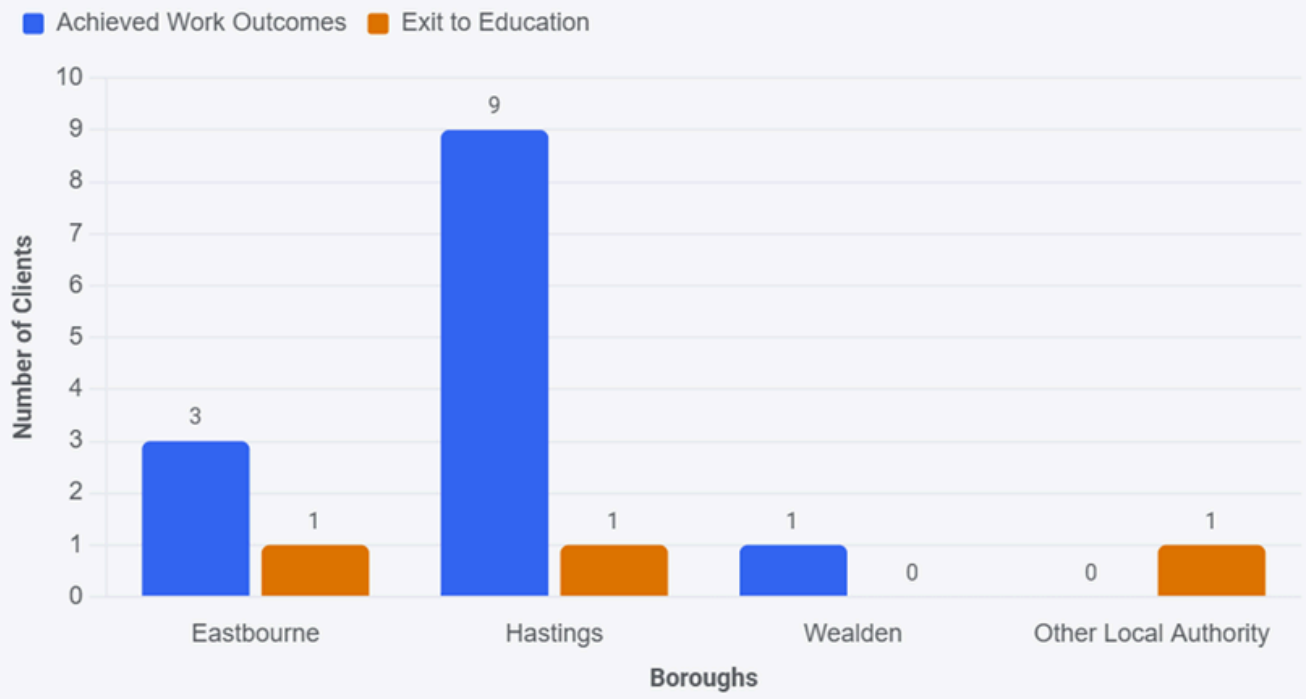
3
Education Exits
to build long-term career skills

140
Active Live Clients

264
Successful Exits to Date

September Spotlight:
8 work outcomes + **3** education exits

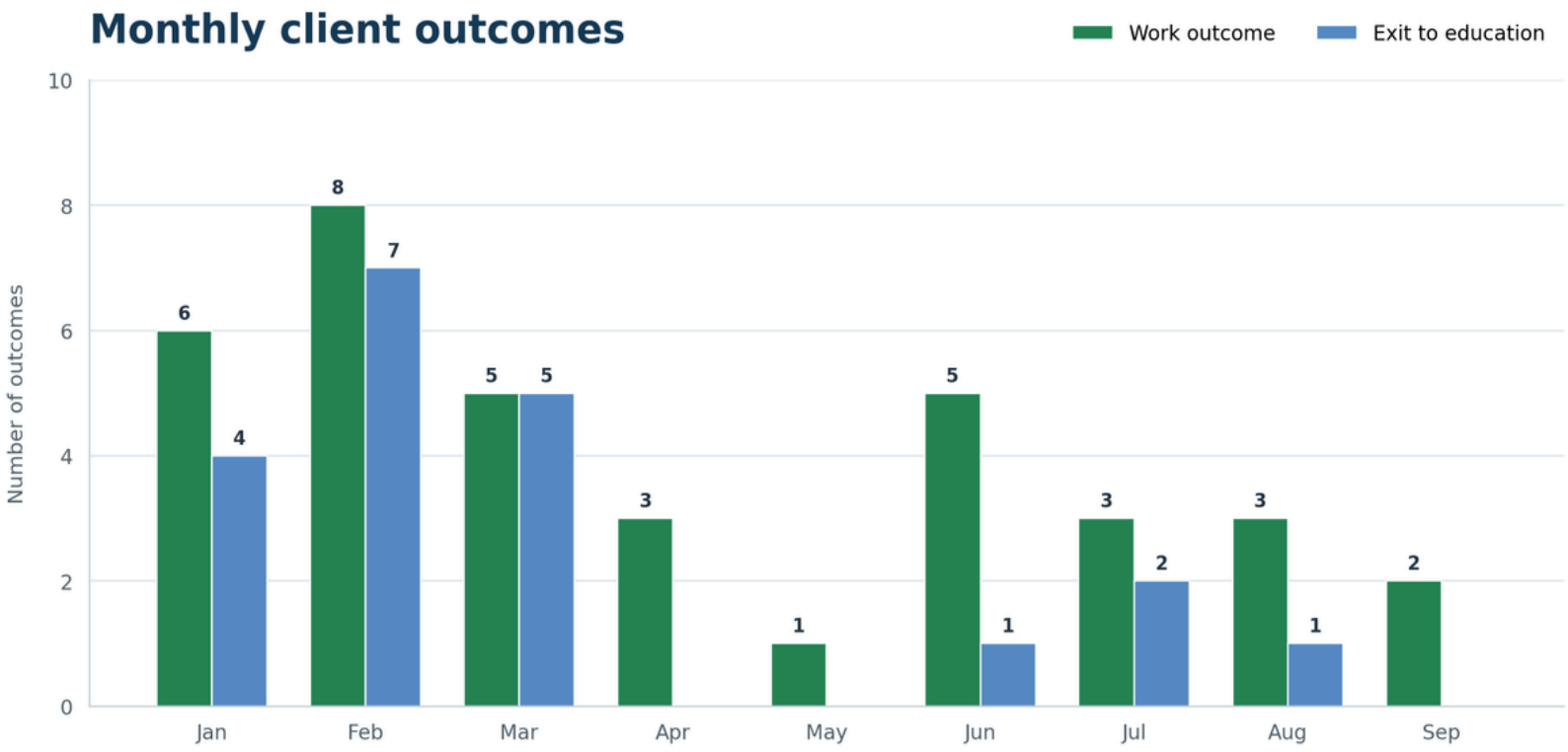
Regional Client Outcomes (July - October)



REP CLIENT OUTCOMES

January–September|Monthly comparison of exits into employment and education

36	20	56	Feb
Workoutcomes	Exits to education	Combined outcomes	Highestmonth: 15 outcomes



	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
Work outcome	6	8	5	3	1	5	3	3	2
Exit to education	4	7	5	0	0	1	2	1	0

Source: REP monthly outcome figures supplied. Totals: 36 work outcomes and 20 exits to education.

An employment satisfaction audit has been introduced to follow up with clients during their first two months of employment. This will help monitor job satisfaction, identify any early support needs and maintain low attrition rates among new starters.

Employment opportunities increased during the summer, particularly in the hospitality sector, as higher-than-usual temperatures and increased tourism benefited the coastal economies of Hastings and Eastbourne.

The number of new clients from the Ukrainian cohort has declined, as many have now settled into employment or are pursuing education and training. Most new clients during this period were from other countries.

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Networking and Events

Building the Care Workforce of Tomorrow – Network Event

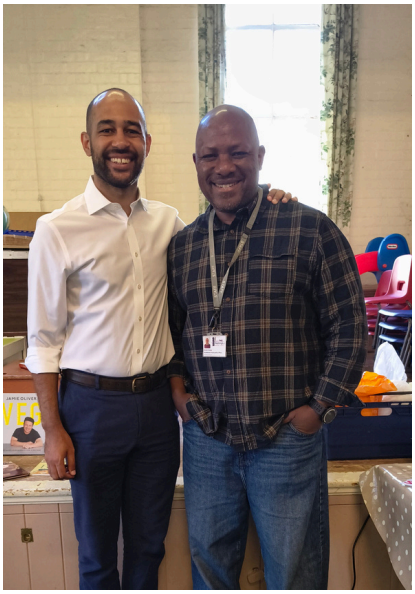
The REP team recently attended the Building the Care Workforce of Tomorrow conference at the East Sussex National Hotel. The event brought together care sector employers, policymakers and industry professionals to explore the challenges and opportunities shaping the future of adult social care.

Discussions covered workforce development, recruitment and retention, international recruitment, Skilled Worker visa requirements and Certificates of Sponsorship. These topics are particularly relevant given the ongoing staffing pressures within the UK care sector. Although vacancy rates have improved, providers continue to face difficulties recruiting and retaining skilled workers, while an ageing population is expected to increase demand for care services significantly over the coming years.

The event provided an excellent opportunity to engage with key stakeholders, including local care employers, Surrey Care Association, SESCA, East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Partners in Care, HR leads, Care Managers, the CQC Compliance Team, Palladium and UKVI policy officers.



The REP team has been occupied not just in getting our clients in to jobs but we were also working, liaising and collaborating with partner organisations in meeting the needs for ethical employment and workplaces, that will foster long term sustainable employment. In order to do so we have continued looking at the Employment rights and treatment of skilled workers who are here on sponsorship visas, with the support of the MP for Eastbourne Josh Babarinde and senior colleagues from ESCC, the statutory and private care sectors.



At the Foodbank with Eastbourne MP Josh Babarinde

Reducing Poverty in Hastings Meeting

A meeting on reducing poverty in Hastings was hosted by the **Hastings Community Network Executive**. The discussions were guided by key principles, including partnership and collaborative working, asset-based community development, transparency and the use of impact data, a non-judgemental approach to people's current circumstances, and investment in people.



The Hastings Borough Council Migrant Support Team attended a community event at the Local Mosque Ward in St Leonards. The team was represented by Simon Finlay, with support from Hastings Borough Council. The event was also attended by the Mayor, Councillor Paula Warne.



Heartfelt Messages from Our Clients

"When I became ill following a stroke and my visa was approaching expiry, I was faced with so much uncertainty... Vincent, Marc, and the team guided me through the process, stood by me through my visa application, and even supported my family with food when we needed it most.
After months of anxiety, my children's visas have finally come through as well. Words cannot adequately express how much your kindness and intervention have meant to us. At a time when I felt vulnerable and overwhelmed, you gave me hope, direction, and reassurance. You did not just offer assistance; you made a real difference in our lives."
Nancy (Not a real name)

"I just wanted to share some good news - I've received my Certificate of Sponsorship from Laurels and submitted my application! Thank you both so much for all your support, guidance, and encouragement every step of the way. I'm feeling very grateful and excited about what's ahead."
Lora (Not a real name)

"When I came to the UK i had no idea how difficult it would be to settle in and find a job, as I had relocated from Hong Kong where I had a stable job, however it was not possible to continue living there due to the political situation and had to make the decision to leave with my family and come to the UK. After living in London for nearly 1 year we were moved to the South East Sussex first to Brighton area, then to Hastings. I relied on the foodbank and universal credit then I was told about the REP team, and approached them for help with looking for work. I started with REP advice to work as a volunteer to gain UK experience, and they actively were involved in my career pathway. They involved me in CV writing,coaching,motivation, job searching, and confidence workshops to prepare me for interviews.
After 5 months of being with REP team,I secured a job in a permanent role in Public service and feel overwhelmed to have had success in a short time"
Kim Young (Not real name)

On behalf of the REP team, I extend my sincere thanks to all individuals and organisations whose continued support and collaboration have contributed to the progress and achievements of resettled communities. Your contribution has been invaluable in shaping our success and future direction. Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Vincent Oyenga REP Coordinator

Hastings.gov.uk Borough Council

East Sussex County Council

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