



Challenges  
Group

**MAKING**  
WORK  
**WORK**

for Edinburgh Women

**MAKING**  
WORK  
**WORK**

---

Learning, Employability And Purpose

## **Making Work Work**

**Update on the initiative &  
its impact for women in Edinburgh**

**Lynn Houmdi  
The Challenges Group**

# Making Work Work: an award-winning, innovative programme based on proven methods, lived experience, continuous improvement and collaboration

Since Jan 2021, Making Work Work programmes have supported almost 200 women in Scotland to transition towards and into meaningful work following a career break. 67% of MWW alumni are now in work, over 50% of them in the third sector. A further 21% are in training, volunteering or actively applying for work.

**MAKING  
WORK  
WORK**

Developed By



Lived  
experience &  
research of  
employability  
barriers;  
networks of  
women

20+ years'  
experience of  
skills  
programming;  
relationship  
with CMI

CAPITAL CITY  
PARTNERSHIP



**CMI** Chartered  
Management  
Institute

flexible Working  
Scotland  
FLEXING WORK TO FIT LIFE  
MAKING WORK WORK

SMART  
WORKS  
SCOTLAND

BUSINESS  
IN THE  
COMMUNITY



# Making Work Work – For Edinburgh Women and LEAP



UK Shared Prosperity Fund

## **Making Work Work – for Edinburgh Women**

April 2023 to September 2024

Supporting 75 unemployed or underemployed women who find it difficult to re-enter or progress in work after a career break

5 peer-support groups of ~15 women

16 online training sessions, plus masterclasses, mentoring, self-study, qualification option

## **Making Work Work - LEAP (Learning, Employability and Purpose)**

October 2023 to March 2024

Partner: Firstport

Supporting 10 highly skilled women facing employment barriers

7 online training sessions and 8-10 weeks pro-bono work placement in social enterprises

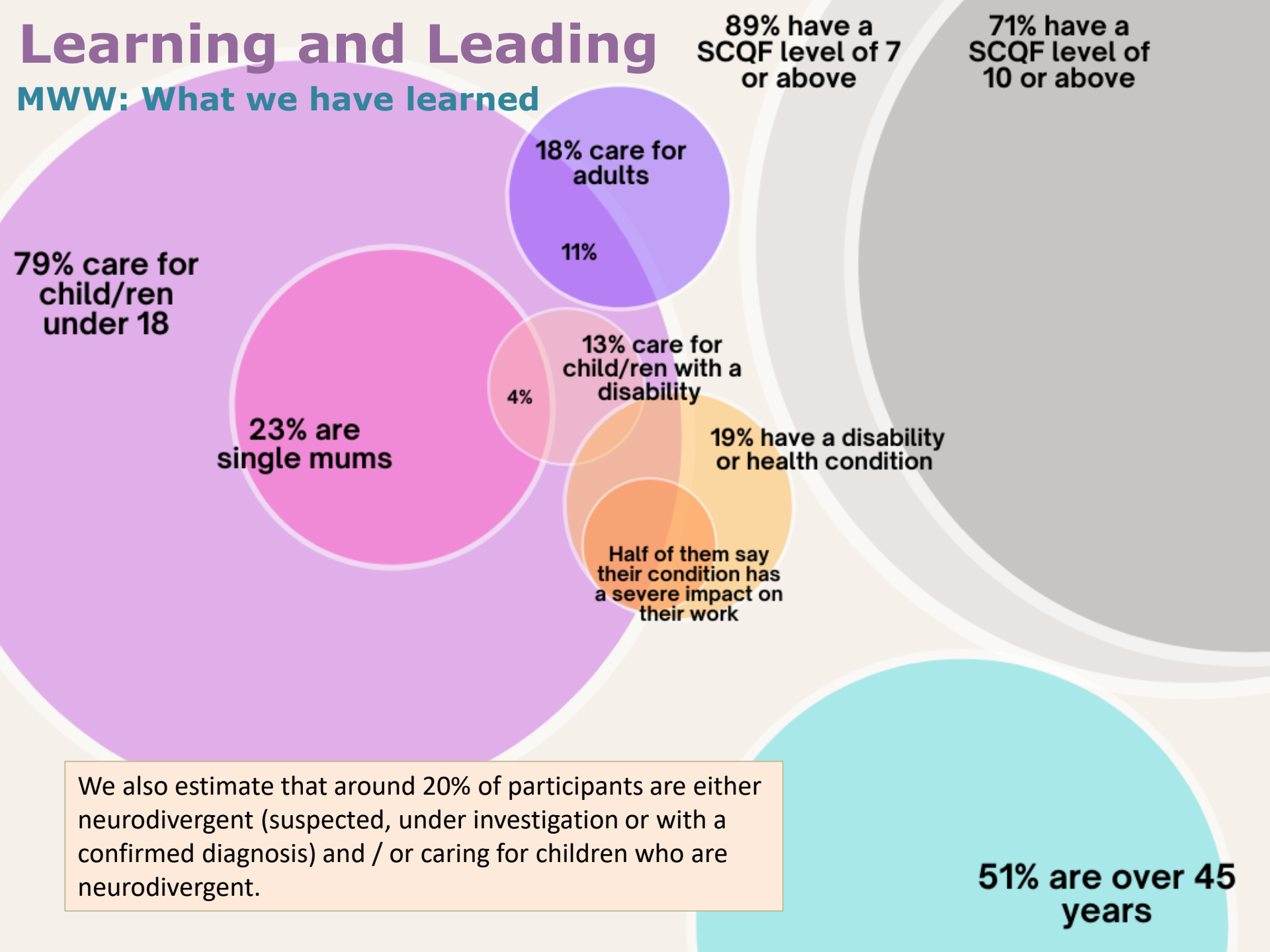
Training for social enterprise managers

# Typical components of a MWW Programme



# Learning and Leading

## MWW: What we have learned



89% have a  
SCQF level of 7  
or above

71% have a  
SCQF level of  
10 or above

18% care for  
adults

11%

13% care for  
child/ren with a  
disability

4%

19% have a disability  
or health condition

Half of them say  
their condition has  
a severe impact on  
their work

23% are  
single mums

79% care for  
child/ren  
under 18

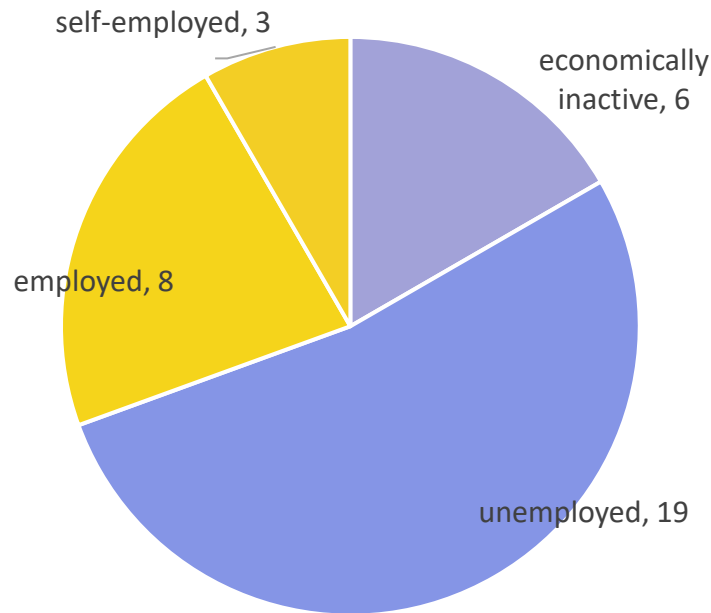
We also estimate that around 20% of participants are either neurodivergent (suspected, under investigation or with a confirmed diagnosis) and / or caring for children who are neurodivergent.

51% are over 45  
years

# Outcomes MWW – for Edinburgh Women

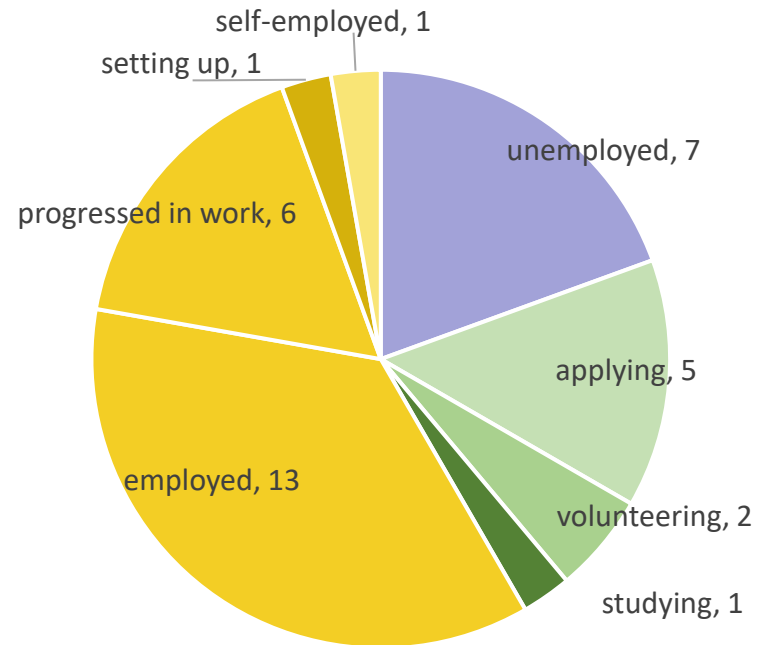
Two training cohorts of 36 women

Before MWW Programme



**Before:**  
**70% unemployed**  
**30% (under)employed**

After MWW programme



**After:**  
**19% unemployed**  
**23% working towards employment**  
**59% (better) employed**

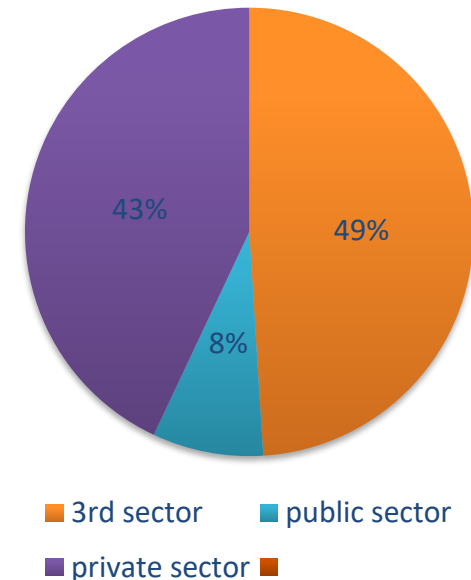
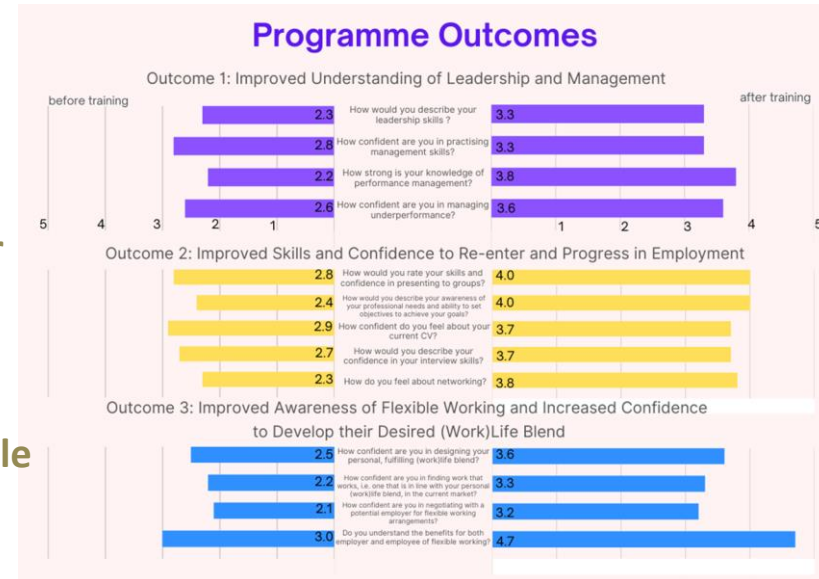
# What we find

## Our impact

- **Making Work Work works:** women benefit from peer learning and 1-2-1 bespoke support
- Women report increased confidence, skills and knowledge
- Women feel informed and empowered around flexible working
- Women move into flexible, meaningful work

## Our observations

- Women returners are typically switchers – they can't or won't go back
- Women's values change during their career break – they seek purpose
- The reason for the career break doesn't disappear. Non-work commitments are non-negotiable
- Women typically choose the third sector for flexibility and values



# Positive Feedback

## What our Participants take out of the Programme

"I've secured myself a short-term Project Support Manager role, I'm also feeling hopeful that this opportunity might lead to others.

Thank you again ladies for all of your help and support."

- Orna



"I've accepted a new job! Whilst it's in the same industry, I've managed to negotiate 3 days a week which I never found possible before - and for better pay, a more senior position and a role I'm much more excited about.

I really think it was helped by the confidence I got from the MWW course. So thank you 🙏"

- Edwina

"I've got the job! I've been head-hunted out of the blue!

Thank you for the insight and the confidence to change my current job which was no longer serving me "

- Hina





