

MARCH 2024 | ISSUE 01

# Broadening Horizons

Taking The Workplace To The Next Generation



## What's inside?

### Good Youth Employment Benchmark

An evolution of 12 years of insight from young people, employers and policy makers.

### Young Person's Entitlement

Pathways For All: Commission on Post-16 Education and Training.



### Laura-Jane Rawlings CEO & Founder

"Champion & Change has long been a part of our purpose."

# Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of our quarterly Champion & Change magazine, where we'll be sharing early careers insight, best practice guidance and news for organisations across the UK.

Champion, Change and Connect are core to our strategy. We champion the voices of young people and our employer community to promote the change needed to ensure young people can make their next step choices. Connecting young people, employers and policy makers is where we're able to facilitate systems change. Together we make a positive change across the nation.

This year has started with real momentum, our staff have travelled around the country to attend events and deliver youth insight sessions. Alongside this we have been preparing for the launch of three of the biggest pieces of work that we will undertake this year.

At the AAC we launched our Commission report and our Young Person's Entitlement. Earlier this month we opened the Youth Voice Census 2024 for responses. Early next quarter we launch our Beta version of the Good Youth Employment Benchmark; a first of its kind, digital tool that allows organisations to monitor and measure their current youth employment practice.

The work employers do to inspire, engage and raise aspirations of young people while they're still in education or before they enter the

workforce falls within our Explore category. **Explore**; is a key pillar of the support we provide our Members and the focus of this edition.

We know that having multiple encounters with employers can reduce a young person's chance of becoming NEET and we know too the scarring effect becoming NEET has on their future prospects. Crucially though, they must be good encounters! How can organisations make sure that their Explore activities are giving the best return on investment for everyone?

We'll journey through the best practice you can apply to your Explore strategy and shine a spotlight on Youth Friendly Employer Haven who have the ambition to support and inspire young people in their local communities, and to combat youth unemployment along the UK coast.

We hope you will take some time as you read to consider how you can make a difference. It doesn't matter whether it's a big or small step; so long as we keep moving forward, we'll ensure no young person is left behind.



**Laura-Jane  
Rawlings MBE**  
CEO & Founder



## CONTRIBUTORS

CEO & Founder  
**Laura-Jane Rawlings MBE**

Deputy CEO  
**Lauren Mistry**

Editor  
**Georgia Williamson**

Designer  
**Louis Fage**

Head of Marketing  
**Kat Wells-Bond**

Policy & Research  
Coordinator  
**Eleanor Chambers**

Senior Education  
& Careers Lead  
**Sarah Latimer**

Business Development  
& Account Manager  
**Laura Ridler**

### Contact us:

**General enquiries:** [info@youthemployment.org.uk](mailto:info@youthemployment.org.uk)

**Membership:** [members@youthemployment.org.uk](mailto:members@youthemployment.org.uk)

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# WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

We attended the 10th Annual Apprenticeship Conference (AAC) at the ICC Birmingham on the 26th - 27th Feb.

During the AAC, CEO Laura-Jane Rawlings and Deputy CEO Lauren Mistry ran a workshop for over 150 attendees on 'Attracting, recruiting and retaining apprentices', which included findings from the 2023 Youth Voice Census and a first look into the data from our Good Youth Employment Benchmark pilot.



The workshop explored insight from young people on what works for them in terms of early careers inspiration, through to the hiring and employment stage of the apprenticeship journey, including the experiences of young people with protected characteristics.



We launched our 'Pathways For All' Commission report during a plenary session, joined by Laura-Jane Rawlings, Commissioner Nick Bailey and Youth Ambassador Ciara. We'll share more about how we'll be taking this work and Youth Employment UK's Young Person's Entitlement forward with our members in the coming weeks.

## Engaging With Young People



Our team engaged locally, attending careers events at a Jobcentre Plus and Tresham College, delivering a youth employment talk to University of Northampton students, and delivering assemblies to students on skills and careers in Bedford. We've also been running a series of Youth Voice Sessions across the West Midlands exploring LMI. Nationally, we've delivered a webinar to

parents across England on post-16 options for young people. The team have also attended the Festival of Apprenticeships events in London and Birmingham, speaking on skills and careers, and sharing our online resources.





## NCS Partnership

We're excited to announce the launch of a new 12 month partnership to boost youth skills and employability. We will be co-developing employability learning resources and insights to support NCS services for young people aged 16-17.

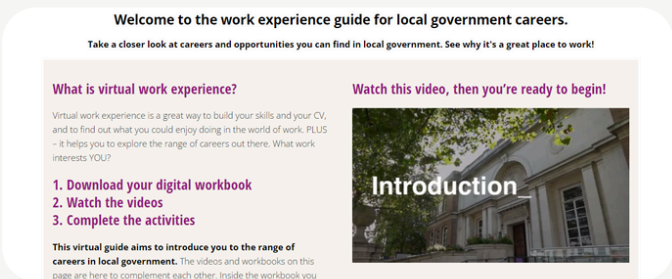


### Youth Voice Census

We have opened the 2024 Youth Voice Census for responses to get an insight into the current youth employment landscape (page 14).

### Commission: Pathways For All

We launched our report 'Pathways For All: Commission on Post-16 Education and Training' at the AAC 2024 (page 7).



### New Virtual Work Experience

We launched a new virtual work experience offer with the Local Government Association, exploring careers in local government.

### New Profiles

We created and launched Organisation Profiles for new members Royal Air Force, Care UK, Lantra, and Kingswood.

## COMING UP

### Dates for your diary

- **Good Youth Employment Benchmark Opens**
  - 29th May 2024
- **Youth Voice Census Closes**
  - 7th June 2024
- **Youth Employment Week**
  - 15th - 19th July 2024



# MEMBERSHIP AND

## WORK WITH US

We're the expert voice on youth employment. This means we're ideally placed to understand the complex employment landscape and to support employers, young people, and policy makers as we drive for full youth employment.

Membership to Youth Employment UK gives you access to best practice, guidance, and recognition through the Good Youth Employment Standards.

Through our Membership and commitment to the Good Youth Employment Standards, we are collectively making a difference with every opportunity. You will find our Members wherever you see the Good Youth Employment Standards Badge.

We're here to assist you in supporting the next generation as they enter the workforce.

Speak to us today, our team is ready to hear from you.

COMMITTED TO  
**GOOD YOUTH  
EMPLOYMENT  
STANDARDS**   
2024



## READY TO JOIN?

Become a member with us:

[www.youthemployment.org.uk/good-youth-employment-membership/](http://www.youthemployment.org.uk/good-youth-employment-membership/)

Alternatively, contact:

[members@youthemployment.org.uk](mailto:members@youthemployment.org.uk)

# RECRUITMENT

Our recruitment packages allow you to showcase your brand and advertise your early careers vacancies with us.

Thousands of young people come to our website for jobs and training opportunities, and your Early Careers Hub is a fantastic place to showcase yours.

Offering additional information about the recruitment and hiring process or workplace puts you at an advantage when attracting young talent.

Using your Profile, provide the information that young people interested in working for will want to know.

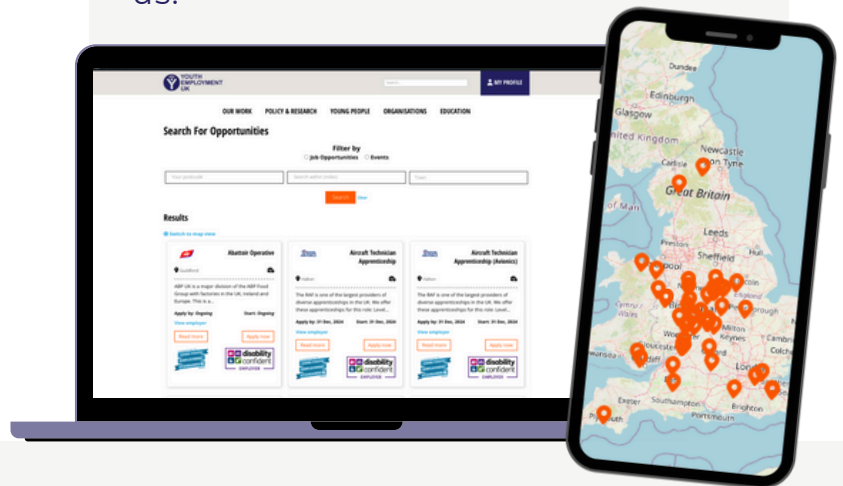
**Get in touch** about becoming a member for expert support with your early careers recruitment.

## OPPORTUNITY FINDER

Our **opportunity finder** provides a place for young people to find quality opportunities with quality employers.

**Posting unlimited vacancies is exclusive to our Profile Members.**

Join the likes of the Royal Air Force, Severn Trent and Coca-Cola Europacific Partners, and promote your early careers vacancies with us.



## Join Our Youth Friendly Community





# POLICY NEWS

**Latest reports, government developments, and policy news that impact the youth employment landscape.**

## **Pathways For All: Commission On Post-16 Education And Training**

We launched the report “Pathways For All: Commission on Post-16 Education and Training” at the Annual Apprenticeship Conference on 27th February 2024.

This Commission was launched to explore the short, medium and long term fiction points in government’s Level 2 and 3 education reforms. The research focuses on the implications for youth employment, offering supporting recommendations to aid the long term aim of streamlining and ensuring the quality of qualifications and pathways available to all young people.

The Commission ran from June 2023 to February 2024. It is funded by City & Guilds, Edge Foundation and NHS England and contributing

commissioners are experts across education, training and employment and aspects of

inclusion and social mobility.

It was not possible to find this data at a national level, which led to the Commission investigating 2 hyperlocal areas: Kettering and Darlington. Through these case studies, we saw that making national policy decisions that affect very different local areas comes with significant risk.

The Commission made a number of recommendations including; Pause and Review of the defunding of Vocational Qualifications, review the criteria of maths and English, review work experience and careers education.

**A significant recommendation from the Commission was for government to commit to a Young Person’s Entitlement at post 16.**



# GOOD YOUTH EMPLOYMENT BENCHMARK

## What is the Benchmark?

The Good Youth Employment Benchmark, a first-of-its-kind digital tool, allows employers to measure and monitor their current youth employment practice.

It will support employers to access the information, advice and guidance they need to grow the quality of their early talent interactions and programmes, particularly for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Access to the Benchmark is available through Youth Employment UK Membership.

It will open annually to take a view of the activities employers have completed in the 12 months prior and what their plans might be for the year ahead.

## How will the Benchmark benefit your organisation?

- 1** It's a guided space that will help you review and reflect on your organisations current practice.
- 2** It'll support you to build on youth employment best practice.
- 3** You'll access a wide range of tailored content and resources that will support your strategic priorities.
- 4** You'll support the wider evidence base of good youth employment practice, feeding into systems of change.

“We're pleased to welcome the launch of the Youth Employment UK Good Youth Employment Benchmark. IES supported the development of the Benchmark with background research in 2022/2023.

We found that other benchmarks and toolkits are rarely based on robust research and most also lack systematic means of collecting data. We are therefore pleased that the Youth Employment UK Benchmark tackles these issues head on.

We are looking forward to seeing how employers can use the Benchmark to improve their recruitment, retention and development of young people in the workforce and how, with support from Youth Employment UK, a real difference is made in the lives of young people looking to get in, and on, in good quality employment.”

**Joy Williams**

Principal Research Fellow,  
Institute for Employment  
Studies





**Lauren Mistry**  
Deputy CEO  
of Youth Employment UK

“Navigating and transitioning into quality work has always been challenging for young people but the last few years have added more complexity to deep rooted issues.

With rising NEET figures, growing economic inactivity and a worrying sense of hopelessness, there is a need for a tool that measures youth employment activity, promotes support and captures evidence on what works.

Employers want to support and retain young people in their workplaces and the Benchmark will provide a unique and comprehensive view of where they are now and what to aim for in the future”

Supported by **youth futures**  
FOUNDATION

As the What Works Centre for youth employment, Youth Futures Foundation has supported the Benchmark to become a more evidence-based and impactful tool to improve employer practice and behaviour.

“The current youth employment system creates and amplifies barriers to work – like ill health, discrimination, or lack of access to information – that stop young people from finding and keeping good work. Changing the system through evidence-based policy and practice is the only way to remove these barriers and to unlock more opportunities for young people.”

## WHAT YOU GET FROM COMPLETING THE BENCHMARK



### REPORTS

See how your organisation sits against industry and region averages.



### RESOURCES

Feed into our annual national ‘Setting the Standard’ report.



### INSIGHT

Tailored content based on your organisations needs.

**Become a Member.**  
**Complete the Benchmark.**

Become a member with us:  
[www.youthemployment.org.uk/good-youth-employment-membership/](http://www.youthemployment.org.uk/good-youth-employment-membership/)

Alternatively, contact:  
[members@youthemployment.org.uk](mailto:members@youthemployment.org.uk)

# Member Spotlight:

Haven is the UK's leading holiday operator, with 38 sites around the UK—primarily in coastal areas—and over 10,000 employees.



Dean Giles, Head of Learning and Development, spoke about supporting young people to overcome employment barriers and raise aspirations.

## Why has Haven taken a new approach to supporting young people in school to explore work

Whilst Haven has a huge demographic of young people employed by us as team members and leaders, we wanted to play a bigger role.

Coming through the pandemic and understanding how the landscape changed, we wanted to offer great opportunities.

We went in with the lens of closing the social mobility gap and that's where the conversation started, very much linked into our diversity and inclusion agenda and creating opportunities for those who may potentially never get them.

Our sector, hospitality, is normally seen as just being a job. There are so many career opportunities and we wanted to get that firmly on the radar from a young age.

## The range of opportunities you are creating is quite vast. What is the reason for this?

We're a large employer within local communities, and we rely on those communities to see us as a choice of employer.

I've visited schools and the young people didn't understand what opportunities were right on their doorstep. Being able to get into the education system a lot earlier helps create that momentum.

It's working with the community, with the education system, with young people, and it's doing the right thing. It's about offering exposure and experiences to young people to help inspire them and help them make great choices.

## Getting buy in: how do you engage young people, the local schools and the organisation as a whole.

What we've done right, is that we've approached it in a steady way. We looked at our data and how we can link early engagement into our strategies to find something we can test and try, and then take out nationally.

We started by getting our brand out there; the question was 'do young people really know us as an employer?'. Building our profile on the Youth Employment UK website was Stage 1. That gave us an opportunity to start engaging with young people.

We then wanted to start building key partnerships with schools in local communities. We had a lot of assumptions about the number of things we could do, but actually each school's needs are different.

We learned it wasn't about going into a school with an agenda, it was about spending the time with students to understand what they need more of.

We can create visibility of not just the brand or the sector, but the careers

## Exploring Haven Careers with Youth Employment UK

Take a look at the ways Haven gets their brand and careers in front of young talent with Youth Employment UK membership:

Organisation  
Profile

Virtual Work  
Experience



pathways and the programmes like apprenticeships and skills bootcamps; all of that great stuff that we have to hand.

### What's next for Haven?

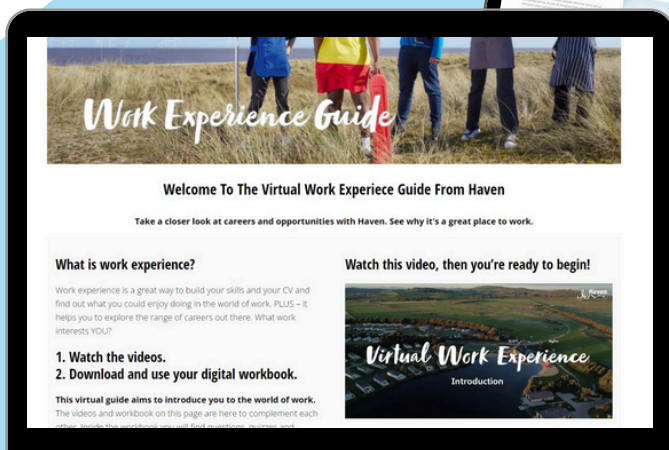
We aspire to have 1 or more partner schools for each of our parks, and we want to be able to create an internal youth voice - this is really important as well.

We're not trying to do everything at once because we need to test and learn. We're going to go through what does/doesn't work. When we're confident, we'll extend our reach.

We want to go a step further and help educate the teaching teams and parents/guardians. They're very influential in a young person's life and they might not be aware of what the opportunities are for their children.

We also want to support with soft skills and bringing that to life so that when they're ready, they'll be fully equipped with their CVs, with the interview process, and they have the confidence and skills to shine in the way that every young person can.

### Listen to the full conversation by watching the webinar.



### Delivering cookery classes to Year 9 students in Blackpool.

Haven worked with students at Highfield Leadership Academy in Blackpool to bring the world of work to life for students.

Students learned about the hospitality and catering industry from a real-life Haven chef who taught them essential cooking skills, whilst doing something incredible for a local charity!

Students worked together in their 'Kindness Kitchen' to create 250 meals for Amazing Grace Soup Kitchen who provide a warm, safe space and food for the homeless.

This included two 3-hour cookery classes for 28 year 9 students who spent the day cooking spaghetti bolognaise (with a vegetarian option too) and apple crumble.

There was also a special guest appearance from Annie, a Haven mascot, who took some time to meet the school's own mascot Bill and visit the kitchen.

"They were learning from our own Haven chef, but they were giving back to a charity they had chosen, something that was close to their hearts. What was really inspiring about that was many students in the room came away from that experience saying they wanted to go and do more."



# CAREERS FAIR CHECKLIST

## Why should you capitalise on careers fairs?

Careers events (local and national) attract a diverse pool of candidates actively seeking employment. They offer valuable opportunities for employers to connect with prospective employees, showcase their brand, build a talent pipeline, and foster positive relationships with school leavers and other job seekers in their local community and beyond.

### DEFINE YOUR OBJECTIVES



What do you want to achieve from the events?

### CREATE COHESIVE BRANDING AND MARKETING COLLATERAL



Beat competition for attention and awareness with an attractive information booth/stand, printed materials, and activities.

### NETWORK



Choose representatives and build personal connections. Be prepared to take CVs/contact details and share insights.

### LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA



Enhance your presence with technology. Consider using tablets/laptops, QR codes, and live tweeting/photo ops.

### FOLLOW UP



Build relationships with potential candidates with focused post event follow up efforts.

### EVALUATE AND LEARN

What worked well and what might you do differently? Get feedback to refine your strategy.



### COLLECT AND ANALYSE DATA



Think about how to best store data and mark against your goals, keeping GDPR and safeguarding rules in mind.

## FURTHER READING

Find out more about early careers outreach:

- [Ways to engage young people with disabilities](#)
- [Early careers outreach in Schools](#)
- [Inclusive early careers strategy](#)
- [Measure the ROI of your early careers strategy](#)



# YOUTH VOICE CENSUS 2024

## Now Open

The Youth Voice Census survey is an annual temperature check that shows us how young people in the UK feel about issues related to education, employment, training, work and where they live.

This year's Youth Voice Census is now open for responses from young people aged 11-30 across the UK.

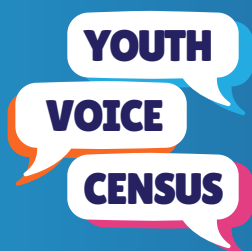
Each year, the findings help to create a backbone of big data evidence for improving policy and youth support in the UK.



### [Download the Media Kit](#)

Download the media pack for resources to show your support and share the Youth Voice Census.

Get example social media messaging, email messaging and visual assets, and find ways to connect with us.



The survey is open from 8th March to 7th June 2024.

# INSIGHT WITH INSIDERS

We spoke to young people to see why explore activities are important to them.

“I met an employer at one of our careers fairs. I took their business card and managed to organise work experience with them after”

“I’m studying IT at college, and sometimes we have people coming in from other areas of IT, for example like cybersecurity, to give masterclasses. Everything we’ve had has been really insightful.”

“We had a 3 day drop down at school where you could go to different rooms and hear from different employers. You got to do workshops with them and hear about what it is they do. It got me thinking about different options”

“We had an investigation workshop day run by employers in that field. It got us thinking about different jobs in that industry”

“The way I came about the apprenticeship for Coca Cola Europacific Partners was at school. I was doing a presentation on work experience and my opinions on it as a student, and CCEP representatives who were there talked to me after my presentation. A week later, I was walking around Coca Cola, seeing how everything is made.”

**Youth Ambassador Amelia**, now qualified in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering through a 4 year apprenticeship with **Coca-Cola Europacific Partners**, a Youth Friendly Employer.

Apprentice of the Year at the FMEA Awards 2021



# HOW CAN YOU RUN ACTIVITIES AND WORKPLACE ENCOUNTERS IN SCHOOLS?

Employers are increasingly recognising the value of engaging with the younger generation as early as possible. By introducing the world of work at school, employers can foster connections with potential future employees and contribute to pupils' development, confidence, and future success.

Workplace encounters in schools provide students with a glimpse into the professional world, helping them to align their educational choices with career aspirations and envision themselves in a professional role. For employers, this is a chance to showcase your company as a great place for young people to work and develop, building a talent pipeline for the future.



## Collaborate with schools and teachers

You will need to foster a collaborative mindset. When you approach schools, show that you understand their needs, constraints, and how your *proposed* activity fits into their broader educational goals.

Not sure how to find or approach a school? Contact local career groups, headteacher groups, or your local authority to find out which schools in the area have the most need for employer engagement activities.

## Understand your audience

Remember that you're addressing students, not seasoned professionals. If you pitch your presentation or activity at the wrong level, they will simply switch off.

Your content, language, and delivery should be relatable and engaging for young people. Real-life examples, stories, and interactive activities can all help to make your session memorable in the right ways.

## Host workplace tours

Allowing workplace visits gives students a real sense of what a professional environment is like.

Start with an overview of your company and industry, then allow students to see different employees/departments in action. Workshop sessions provide a chance to participate and share ideas. Wrap up with a Q&A where students can ask questions about your business, industry, or particular roles.

## Offer job shadowing opportunities

Job shadowing allows students to spend a day with a professional in your company, seeing them at work and learning all about what they do.

This type of deep dive offers them valuable first-hand insight into the reality of your field, your industry, or a particular role.

The full article is available to our Members here:

**[How can employers run activities and workplace encounters in schools](#)**

Join our Membership to gain access to our extensive bank of resources on Youth Employment topics including outreach, recruitment, retention and more.

**[Find out more about our Membership here](#)**



# CONNECT WITH US

Contact us for marketing & PR enquiries



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@youthemploymentuk



[info@youthemployment.org.uk](mailto:info@youthemployment.org.uk)

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Champion  
Change &

Your expert youth employment magazine