



WE MIND THE
GAP.™

THE BIG CONVERSATION

Employer Partners Insights

July 2025



Prifysgol Wrecsam
Wrexham University



Funded by
UK Government
Wedi ei ariannu gan
Llywodraeth y DU





Executive Summary

In January 2025, the Big Conversation Flintshire was launched, beginning with a community engagement strand. Led by WeMindTheGap in partnership with Wrexham University's Civic Mission team, the aim was to engage with as many young people aged 18–21 and community members in Flintshire as possible. This community engagement element focused on gathering insights into the lived experiences of young people, using a strength-based approach to understand what they need and want to thrive. Across January, a total of 507 young people engaged with the Big Conversation, telling us what life is like for them, and what could make it better.

In February 2025, the employer engagement strand of the Big Conversation began, aiming to speak with local employers, exploring their experiences in recruiting, retaining, and developing young people aged 18–21. This included identifying both the strengths and challenges that this age group brings to the workforce, the nature of work experience opportunities available, and being curious about their awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Trauma-Informed Practice.

WeMindTheGap's ambition is to bring together the findings from both engagement strands - young people and community members, and employers, to identify gaps, highlight opportunities, and inform areas for development. By collating these insights, the Big Conversation Flintshire seeks to generate a deeper understanding of how to best support the next generation to thrive.

Of the 207 businesses in Flintshire that we contacted directly, 57 agreed to take part, representing more than 2300 employees.

- **46** engagements were conducted face to face
- **10** were completed online
- **1** was completed over the phone.

Businesses were invited to complete a questionnaire, completed in person or via a weblink. The survey sought to gain information on:

- The size and nature of the organisation itself.
- Their experience of recruiting 18 – 25 into their business.
- Strengths and challenges of employing 18 – 25 year olds.
- Insights on retention and progression of young people in their businesses.
- Work experience.
- How they practically support young people once employed.
- And what opportunities they would like to offer young people.



Insights and Reflections

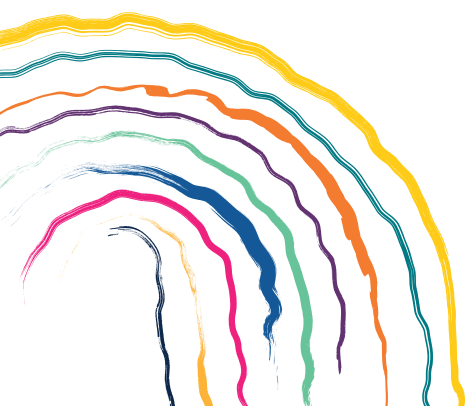
We found it really difficult getting responses, often told by businesses that they couldn't complete the survey because of GDPR restrictions. Whilst we were able to reassure that we were not requesting any personal data, it still did not always lead to participation.

The team felt that some were leaning on GDPR not to complete the survey, reporting that one supermarket manager became hostile when requested to engage with us. When advised that it would be anonymised, they said "How do I know you are just saying one thing then do another thing with your report". This highlights the importance of our trusted referral model, as explored further below.

Many managers on duty requested that we gain Head Office approval or declined to complete it at store level. It is hard to ascertain whether this was a genuine restriction by Head Office, however it did bring up further questions as to whether the manager did not have sight of employment or recruitment, felt unable to represent their organisation, or did not have permission to do so. It was recognised that those managers with sight of, or involvement in recruitment processes gave lots of qualitative information.

Our team contacted the 27 existing organisations that we work through our employability programmes in Flintshire, of these 5 engaged with the Big Conversation, sharing very detailed feedback, highlighting their honest feelings, thoughts and experiences when employing young people aged 18-21.

The employers that were not able to engage with the Big Conversation often shared that they were in an incredibly busy period, asking to reschedule when they had time, or that they would complete digitally in their own time but unfortunately, this was rarely done.



Trusted Referrer model

WeMindTheGap are proud of their 'Trusted Referrer' model, recognising trusted organisations, businesses or employers as those that we have a long-standing relationship with, who understand our ambitions and share our core values.

On reflection, our team recognise that when approaching employers during this period, that perhaps our initial request had not fully equipped them with an understanding of WeMindTheGap, our ambitions and the reason

behind our contact clearly enough. We believe that had they understood the value that their participation would have on youth employment locally, and the support that they could receive from organisations such as WeMindTheGap, they would have prioritised time to speak with us, or complete the digital form.

As with WeMindTheGap's experience of working with young people, this shows that we need to start with the 'why', and that trust takes time to build.

Correlation with What Young People Told Us

In the community engagement element of the Big Conversation, when asking young people 'what could make life better?', we were able to draw out key themes from their responses. We found that young people wanted more social activities, improved public transport links, job opportunities and skills development relevant to a changing world, as well as better relationships between generations in Flintshire.

In our Employer Engagement findings set out in this report, confidence and independence

were reported to be the largest gap noted in young people's skills, it could be suggested that all four of the common threads that we heard from young people throughout January, could in turn contribute to a lack of confidence and independence.

This reflection shines a light on a potential systematic gap between employers challenges and young people's perceived barriers: the gap from both the employer and young person's perspective must be minded.

Generational Disconnect

Like many business representatives from older generations, when conducting community engagement in January, our team were often approached by community members who shared negative perceptions of young people, often being dismissive of the barriers that they were facing. Statements such as 'they're all in bed or in prison', 'they live online, not in the real world' were made to us, this could be correlated with the 25 employers that shared with us that 'work ethic' was a gap in young people.

Looking to the future, employers acknowledge that this may become a concern, one employer told us that have an ageing work force with

"70% of their staff have been there over 10 years." Bringing the spotlight onto the issue and the need to bring generations together and build a better working relationship.

However, it should also be recognised that over 25 employers told us that young people brought creativity & innovation, and over 25 telling us that young people brought IT & tech skills to their business.

Amongst older generations, there is some work to do in recognising that the world is ever changing and reframing and celebrating the skills that young people hold in supporting organisations to adapt.

Steps to Supporting Great Youth Employment

Training

It is acknowledged that Covid-19 should be regarded as an Adverse Childhood Experience, and as such all young people now entering the world of work have at least one 'ACE'. It is well documented that ACEs can have a significant impact on a person's development, brain function and their health and wellbeing as an adult. (Appendix 4).

The opportunity to deliver ACEs awareness training to employers would create more supportive and understanding workplaces, in turn improving staff retention, and could support to close the generational gap by increasing awareness.

By WeMindTheGap supporting employers to become trauma informed in creating a culture where employees feel safe and comfortable to disclose if they have experienced an ACE, employers could identify how they could support individuals and to avoid traumatisation.

WeBridge

Recognising that both young people and employers told us that 18-21s were missing key skills development, WeMindTheGap are introducing a Bridge to Employment programme to Flintshire.

WeBridge will work with both businesses and young people to identify and fill skills gaps through focussed ad-hoc support, available to young people when they are ready.

WeBridge will be underpinned by the COM-B model of behaviour change (Appendix 5), looks at the motivation, capability and opportunities of young people that we are introduced to.

Motivation - we work with young people who want to work, we ask in which field, we broaden their horizons, we look at where they live, accessibility to work, how many hours and times etc

Capability - we work with young people who have many capabilities to work, but look if there are gaps, we can fill in the fields they want. Eg Manufacturing - FLT licences, Food hygiene certificates, MH at work training, we support young person to know their capabilities

Opportunities - we introduce our Gappies to our Employer Partners, or if there is a new employer, we meet with that employer and take a trauma-informed approach to supporting our Gappie into work eg - go with them on the first day, to interview.

We then offer in work mentoring to support our Gappies to stay and progress in work.





Transport

We will continue to lobby for improved, more accessible and more affordable transport routes across Flintshire, advocating for young people nationally.

We have adapted our initial contact with young people introduced to our employability programmes by being curious about their local public transport links, as well as taking a trauma informed approach to supporting them to access a work placement or a prospective workplace.

When public transport to a workplace is inaccessible, we will support a young person to advocate for themselves in supporting an employer to understand what they need to get to work.

Build Generational Connection

We are committed to close the gap between generations across Flintshire, and believe that in order to do so, we need to show courage in shining a light on this gap.

We've adapted the format of our programmes to include Community Weeks and inter-generational volunteering, focussing on building local connections and relationships between generations through activity.

We're also sharing the findings of our Big Conversation far and wide via a 5 minute film, ensuring that the local community and employers have the opportunity to listen first-hand what life is like for 18-21 year olds, and what they are truly thinking and feeling.

By sharing that 46% of young people told of that they were lonely, we can bridge the gap between communities experiencing social isolation and promote a sense of belonging.

We are passionate about challenging pre-existing or traditional beliefs about young people and their circumstances, as well as celebrating their innovation and resilience in an ever-changing world.



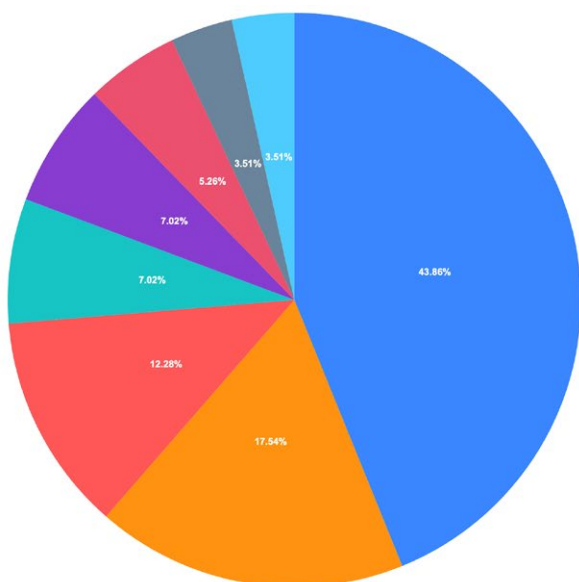
Data and Insights from the Questionnaire

1. About the Organisation:

Sector/ Industry

Retail and hospitality dominated the Big Conversation, as shown in the pie chart below.

The team recognise that businesses within the hospitality or retail sectors were easier to conduct impromptu or unplanned conversations with as they are public facing. Of the respondents, 14 are based on Broughton Shopping Park.



*Note that Other includes manufacturing, travel and tourism, engineering, recruitment, arts, re-engineering, and construction.

● Retail ● Hospitality ● Other ● Charity ● Leisure ● Construction ● Education ● Services

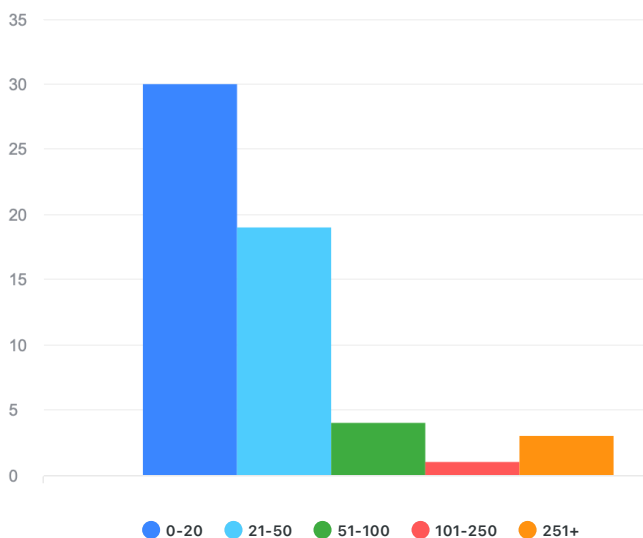
Organisation size

Question asked: Approximately how many employees does your organisation have?

Participants were given drop down options shown in the bar graph below.

Most participating organisations had under 50 employees in size. Our team shared that larger organisations often requested we gain Head Office permission, which is described further in the insights section of this report. It could be suggested that smaller organisations can potentially be easier to build working relationships with, as well as the possibility that they are more embedded in the local community.

Organisation size

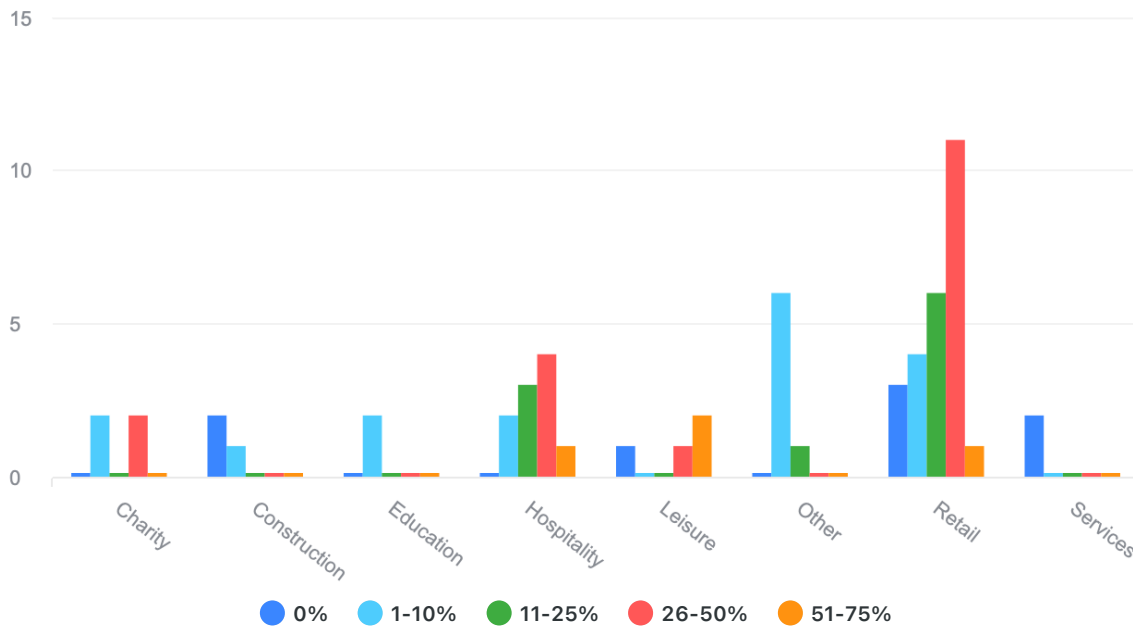


Proportion of the workforce below 21

Question asked: Approximately what proportion of the workforce is aged below 21?

Correspondents in the Big Conversation were asked to estimate the percentage of their staff aged under 21. Again, we are able to see that hospitality and retail dominate, with a substantial bulk of those employed in these industries being under 21.

Percentage of workforce under 21 by sector



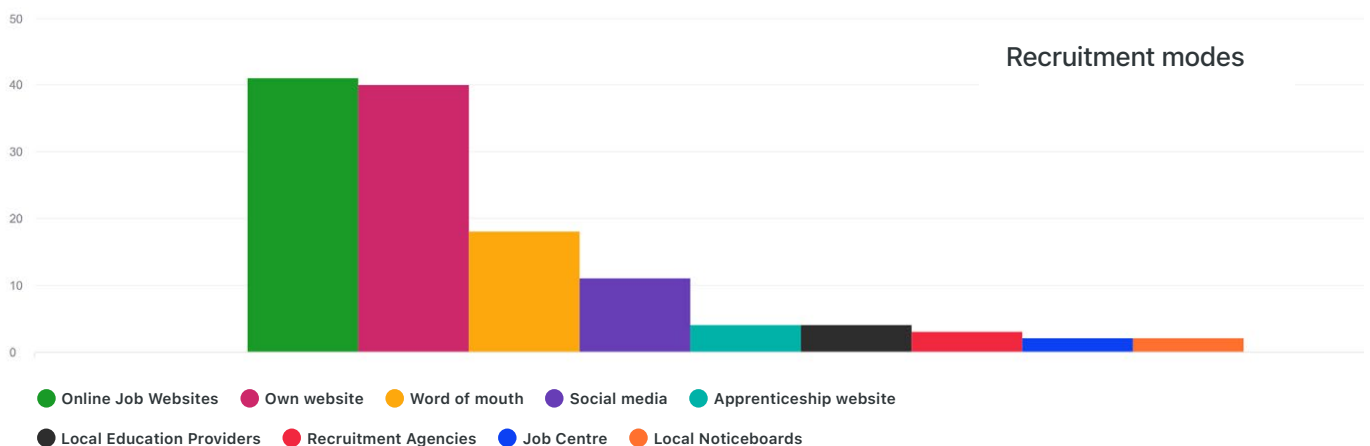
2. Recruitment of 18-21-year-olds:

Methods of Recruitment

Question asked: Where do you typically recruit 18-21s/ entry level positions?

The most common way for young people to find out about roles available was via online job sites and on the organisation's websites. Word of mouth was also a key recruiting method, while social media played a surprisingly small role.

Participants were given drop down options shown in the bar graph below.

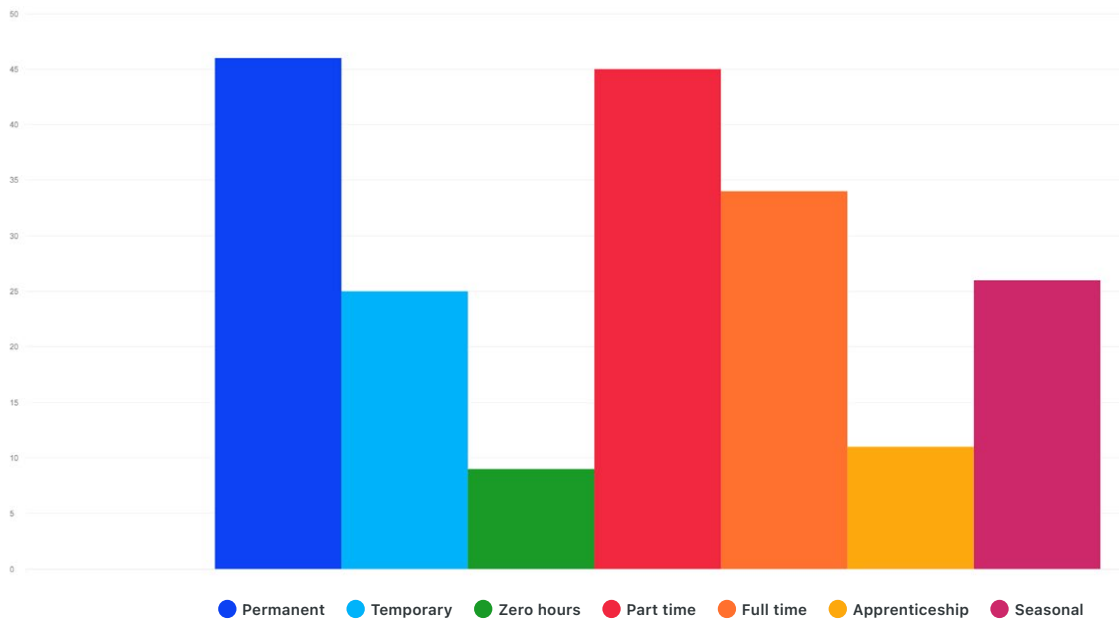


Entry Level Roles

Question asked: Which of these typically apply to the entry level positions offered by your organisation?

Participants were given drop down options shown in the bar graph below. Nobody selected the option 'internship'.

Entry level role types



The most common responses were part-time and permanent roles. A retailer told us that this combination often leads to young people 'being in work but underemployed'. They also shared they were struggling to recruit long-term staff as they were only able to hire for part-time work, offering an 8-hour contract due to budget restraints, even though in reality they would be willing to work 20+hours a week. It was felt that this could lead to low job security, with employees moving on to find full-time work, leading to low staffing numbers and lone-working.

This also reflects an untrue picture of what a business needs to run and adds to the uncertainty around business confidence and security. While these can lead to permanent full-time contracts, this isn't always the case leaving the businesses short staffed especially considering that it was reported that young people don't necessarily pick up extra shifts.

Our team shared surprise to hear the low level of zero-hour roles on offer, given their prominence in the media, however we were told many times by employers that they do not offer zero-hour contracts, with some stating that their smallest contract was 20 hours.

Seasonal positions were also common, unsurprisingly in hospitality and retail sectors.

Only 10 of the 57 businesses participating (18%) offered apprenticeships.

Role types available

Question asked: What positions are typically offered at entry level in your organisation?

Participants were asked in this question to type typical entry level roles in their organisation, no drop-down options were given. The most common words are shown in the word cloud below.



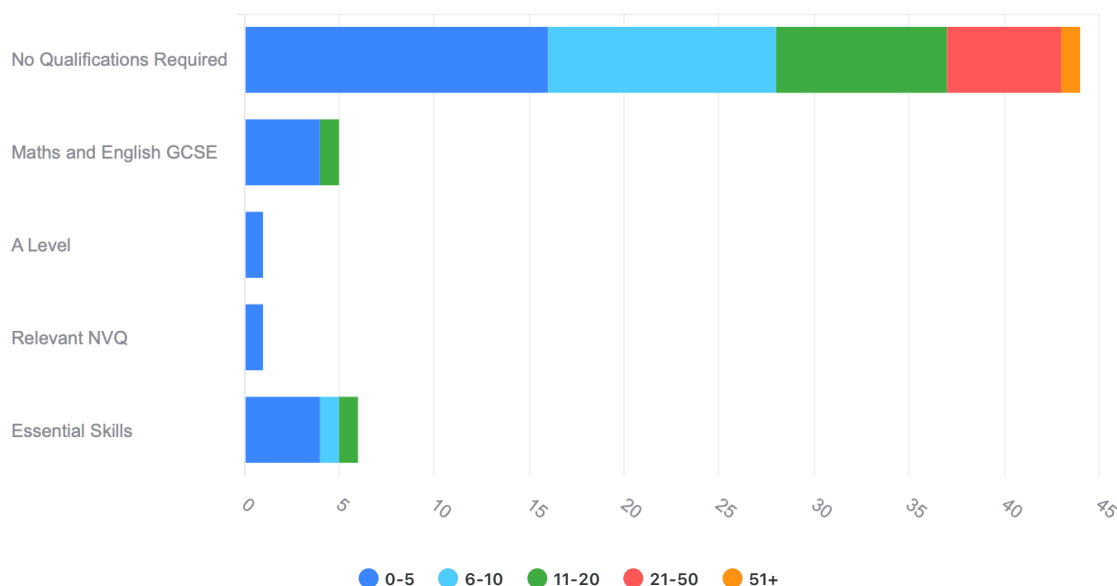
Entry Requirements

Question asked: What are the required qualifications for entry level positions at your organisation?

Very few of the 57 businesses participating in the Big Conversation required any qualifications past the age of 16, with the vast number of roles (77%) offered at Entry Level not requiring GCSEs. A smaller number (9%) required Maths and English GCSE, or Essential Skills (11%) (See Glossary of Terms).

The graph below indicates the number of entry level roles offered per year compared to the required qualifications. Some organisations were offering large numbers of new positions, requiring no qualifications. This could have implications for pay, likely offering a lower level. It could also lead to barriers for promotion and further development within the organisation.

Number of entry level jobs and qualification level



Changes to Recruitment

Question asked: Has recruiting young people changed over the past five years? How?

Subtext: Did it change/ was it affected in Covid? Have you altered your recruitment process?

Most businesses told us that their interview processes had changed since Covid, however there was a large variation in the changes made. Many reported going solely online and/or being vetted by Head Office first, sharing that this has streamlined their processes at a local level. Whilst others said that they had made their recruitment process more flexible, offering interviews on Teams or in-person.

Some businesses shared that they now hold open days and group interviews, finding they get a better turn out from applicants.

The overarching change that businesses reported over the past 5 years was that they had made their application processes easier, however it wasn't often clarified if these processes were simplified for the employer or the applicants.

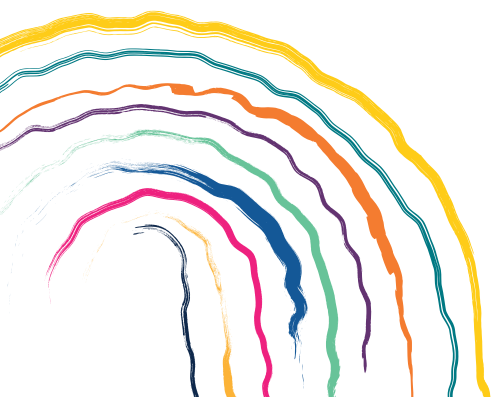
It was recognised by some that there had been a significant change in how young people view the recruitment process and how equipped they are for it. It was noted that after Covid young people were less ready, due to reduced communication skills, few having prior work experience and a change in mindset, preferring flexibility and taking a short-term view of the roles on offer. This has, in part, led to challenges in attracting diverse candidates. A growing need for mentorship and support was noted, from the onset of the recruitment process.

"When being interviewed, young people are keen to know more about us, they want to know what the company can do for them rather than what they can do for it."

Recruitment and talent specialist

"No one wants to come to interview because they view it scary. 20 initially invited for interview day none showed. Recruited over 3 days, made it a open opportunity, interview reduced and on the job taster for an hour."

Coffee Shop Manager



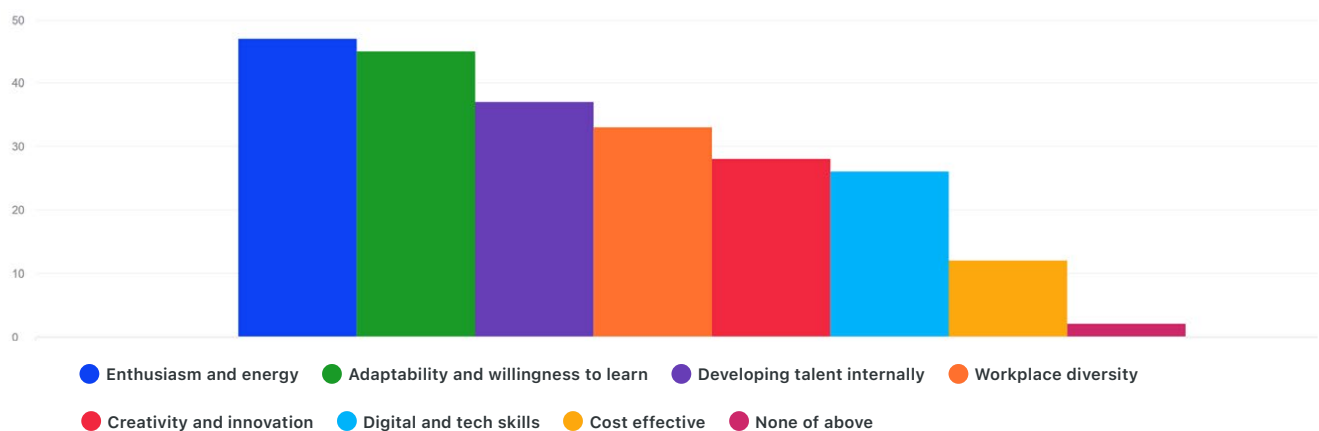
3. Strengths and Challenges of 18–21-year-olds in the Workplace

Strengths

Question asked: What benefits do your organisation currently gain from employing 18–21-year-olds? (participants invited to tick all that applied).

Most businesses that engaged valued the strengths which young people bring to their organisations. It was clear that young people were not perceived as merely being a cost-effective solution by many of the participants.

Strengths of young people in the work place



Enthusiasm and energy were reported by 82.5% telling us that it was one of the key strengths when employing young people aged between 18 to 21. An organisation in the Arts told us that they have 'shifted to support a new generation and become a training ground for artists'. Many reported that the next generation brings innovation in new ways of working, new and creative ways of thinking. This again was highlighted by a retailer sharing that 'people aged 18 to 21 bring new ideas, when working on tills or when dealing with customers, their great bringing a new perspective.

Our team felt that when speaking with managers who were closer to 18- to 21-year-olds, they shared increased understanding how to get the best of employees in that age. Speaking with a local Bank Branch Manager in their early 20's, we heard that 'it's better to hire in the 18 to 21 age bracket as they are better adapting as the business goes online', also sharing that the business had hired more 18- to 21-year-olds on apprenticeships and then moved them through the business, showing development of internal talent for the benefit of the business.

"I'm in my 20s and my observation is this age group are more mature than when I was at that age."

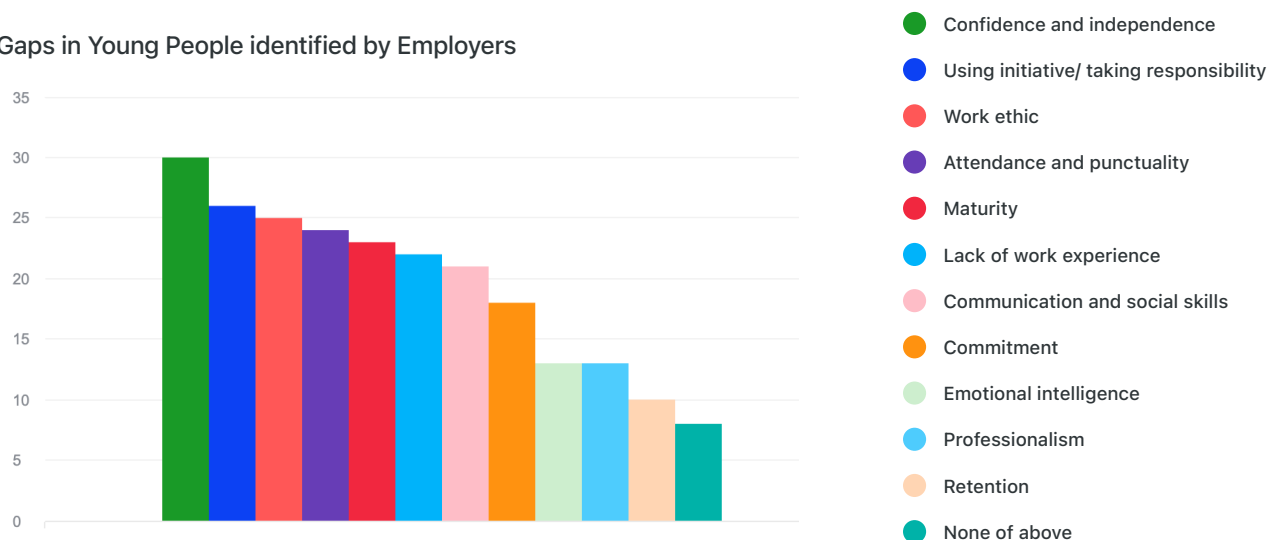
Store Manager, Hospitality

Challenges

Question asked: Has recruiting young people changed over the past five years? How?

Subtext: Did it change/ was it affected in Covid? Have you altered your recruitment process?

Gaps in Young People identified by Employers



Our team reflected that when meeting with managers in older generations, it was felt that maturity confidence was very low for 18- to 21-year-olds, with 63% of businesses telling us about gaps in young people being around maturity and confidence.

We were told by one business owner that 'they would never hire a person aged between 18 to 21 as they have no get up and go.' A retailer told us that they 'don't want to work, always on their phone. Don't realise it's hard graft.' This correlates with a gap between generations that we found through our community engagement strand, which is further explored in the Insights section of this report.

When discussing their recruitment process, a construction firm told us that "some young people were being walked into the interview with their parents." This highlights low confidence, with some not being ready for the world of work. This is also corroborated by the Youth Futures Foundation report "Youth Employment Outlook 2024" (Youth-Employment-2024-Outlook.pdf), which highlighted the role mental health, and in particularly anxiety, is impacting young people at key transition points.

56% of employers told us that young people are not committed or have challenges around attendance. It was reported that young people are rarely picking up extra shifts, which in turn is having a detrimental effect to how business can operate. Employers told us that they struggle to fill shifts when someone calls in sick or is on holiday, with some employers suggesting that as many young people still live at home with parents and are being told to work, they don't really need the money as they have a roof, heating and food already.

43.8% of businesses highlighted work ethic as gap in young people, with an employer sharing with us that they feel that "Young People are now that they are being told they a need a job rather than want jobs". With many young people still living at home due to many reasons including Covid, or the Cost-of-Living crisis, many don't face the pressures from the outside world that can really push them into work.

We found that one employer reported “extremes in personality” being prevalent in the age bracket, including ‘young people being overconfident and very assured in themselves, for example, they will not go above and beyond their job.’ On the other hand, 53% of businesses shared that young people lacked confidence, whether reporting that young people didn’t have the confidence to say no to a task when they have no capacity to do it, or to ‘having parents’ step-in try to solve issues with the workplace.’

“Not turning up to shifts and no communication.

Finding their work ethic challenge and keeping up with the pace of the job. Some young people appear quite lazy e.g hiding products behind other products or dumping products in the wrong places. Not being ready on shop floor at start time or leaving shop floor before finish time to get changed and then clock out.”

Supermarket manager

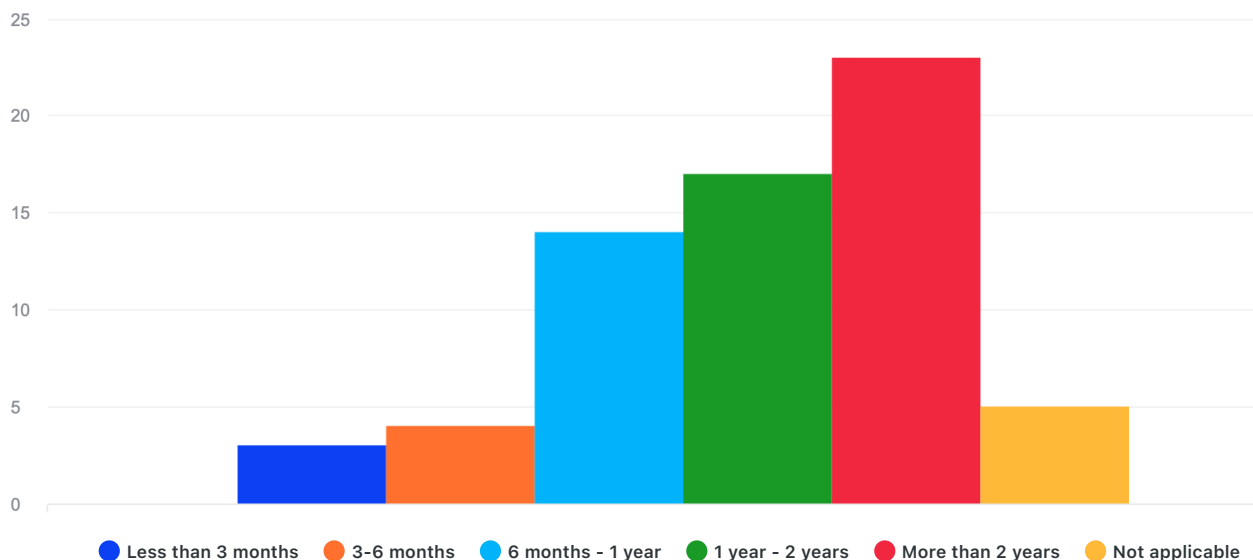
4. Retention and Progression of 18–21-year-olds in the workplace

Retention

Question asked: How long do 18–21-year-olds typically stay in your organisation?

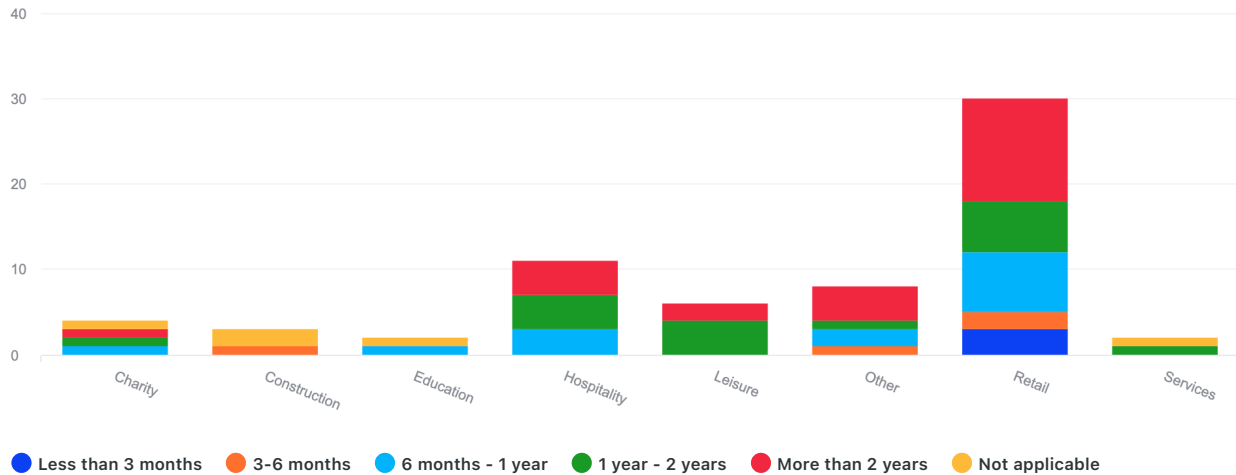
Recruitment of young people amongst the organisations interviewed was often seen as successful, as demonstrated by the data below. Almost all organisations said that young people tend to stay for over six months for them, and the most common option was for over two years.

Employment retention of young people



There are no noticeable differences across sectors. Despite the reputation of the hospitality and retail sectors as having high levels of staff turnover, young people do tend to stick with their roles in these industries. The Leisure industry was also successful in retaining young staff in their roles.

Employment retention of young people by sector



Reasons for leaving

Common reasons for young people leaving



61% of employers told us that the most common reason for young people leaving the business was to take their next career step. Many provided narrative around this, stating that young people were working alongside college or university, staying for the duration of their course, then pursuing a full time in the sector of their choice.

The most common reasons given demonstrate that young people tend to utilise entry level positions as a platform for progressing into their next steps, whether that onto the next stage of their career, or by returning to education.

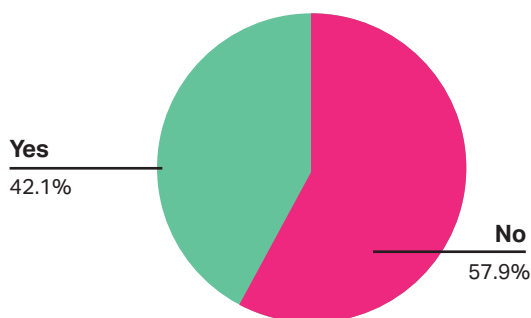
Despite the gaps reported in young people by employers, it was recognised that these were rarely impacting a young person or their work enough to lead to dismissal. Instead, it could be said that the data above shows that these gaps can be overcome, and that young people are prioritising their progression in their careers.

6. Work Experience offer

Strengths

Question asked: Does your organisation offer work experience/ placements?

Participants were asked to select either a yes or no option.



42% of organisations interviewed offer work experience, while 8 of those who do not shared that they would be willing to consider doing so in the future.

When reflecting on entry level employees, the same percentage tended to have work experience before starting their role.

While sharing the challenges of young people in the workplace, feeling that many were not ready for work, 86% of employers also told us that they were not open to offering work experience.

7. Supporting Young People

Developing young people

Question asked: How does your organisation support young people aged 18-21 to develop?

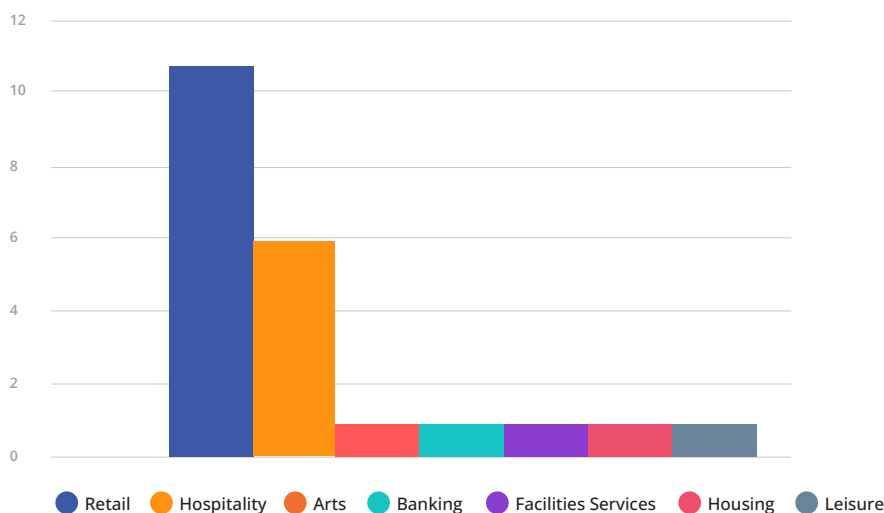
Dropdown options included: A mentor, Training and development opportunities, routine check ins, Wellbeing support, Travel to work schemes, soft skills training i.e. communication, Supporting Professional Qualifications, Recognition of Achievements, Flexible Working Hours, Team Building/ Social Events.

64.9% businesses shared that they were conducting social activities to potentially fill the gaps where team members were not engaging with social events in their personal lives, in hand supporting to build a good team culture. Employers were often able to recognise that a work has sense of belonging and this is important for a productive work force, again highlighting the need for social events to build that.

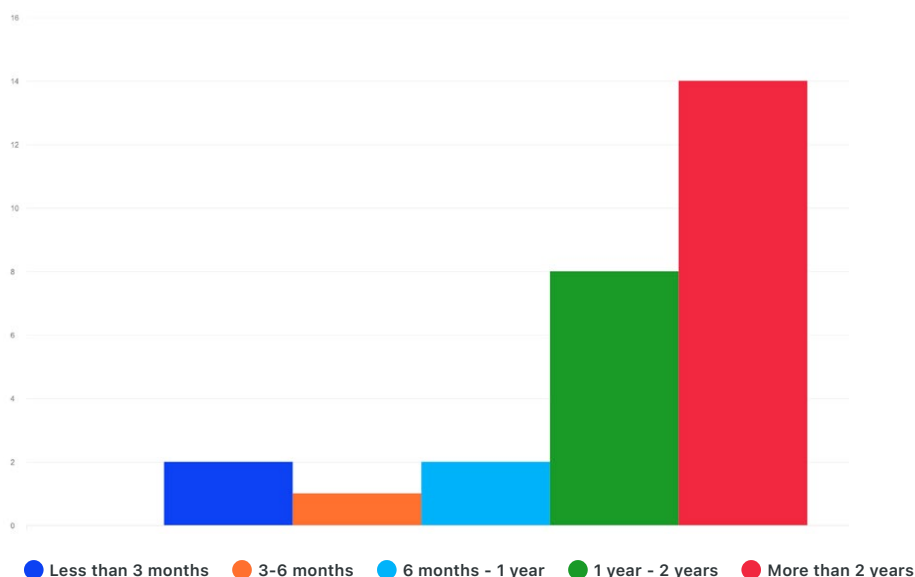
Transport Links

Transport was another key point highlighted across all employers, with some stating that transport “great” to the complete opposite with one stating it was “naff.” We found that employers who were on the coast such as Flint had good transport links due to consistent buses and a train station, however those inland found public transport more difficult. Some employers highlighted that public transport didn’t meet their own business needs, such as starting too late in the morning or finishing too early before the business closed. One business told us that they “pay half the taxi fee” so staff can get home if they finish after public transport finishes. One business told us that they look to recruit people who can drive as they have no transport to site at all, however this could broaden the inequalities gap. Sunday was highlighted as especially hard for employers with public transport even more infrequent and starting later and finishing earlier, again not meeting the needs of the business.

Employers offering transport scheme by sector



Staff retention with travel to work schemes



ACES and Trauma Informed Practice Awareness

Question asked: Have you heard of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?

Subtext: These are potentially traumatic events that can occur in childhood, from birth to age 17.

Question asked: Are you aware of Trauma Informed Practice?

Subtext: Core principles of safety (physical and emotional), trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, & empowerment

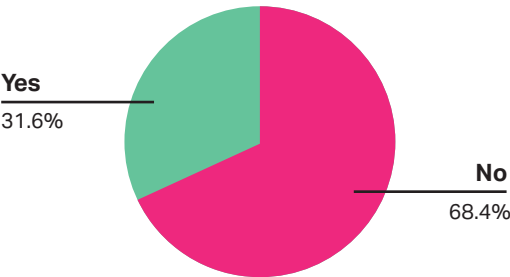
When asking businesses whether they had knowledge of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) we found that 31.6% businesses had heard of them while 68.4% hadn't.

In 2016, Public Health Wales reported that over 47% of adults in Wales suffered at least one adverse childhood experience. These can affect adults and children alike, leading to poor mental health, adopting health harming habits such as drugs or alcoholism, and they can have poor performance within a work setting. It is concerning that over two thirds hadn't heard of ACEs and shows that more needs to be done across Wales to break the cycle.

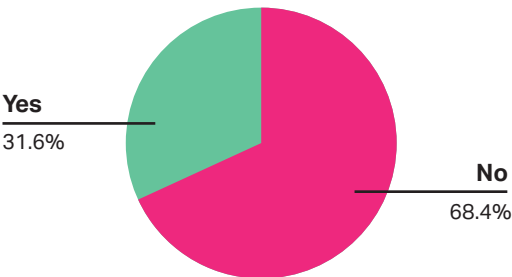
However, when asked about Trauma Informed approaches, not all employers with awareness of ACEs had heard of this. We had the same findings with 31.6% saying they had heard of Trauma Informed approach and 68.4% said they hadn't.

It is the ambition of the Welsh Government through the Trauma informed framework (Appendix 3) that everyone is Trauma aware. Launched in 2022, this shows that there is still some way to go in achieving that ambition. Trauma has a massive impact on an individual's wellbeing and ability to perform in the workplace. We found that less than a third of managers in Flintshire businesses understood this.

Heard of ACE?



Aware of Trauma Informed Practice



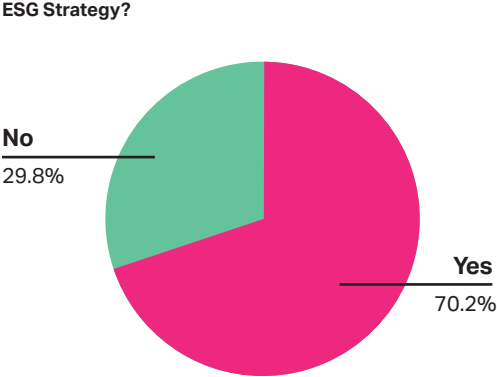
Equal numbers of organisations had heard of ACEs and Trauma Informed Practice, but interestingly these do not align, as shown in the table below:

No. heard of ACE and Trauma Informed Practice

Heard of ACE, Trauma Informed Practice	YES	NO	Total
YES	13	5	18
NO	5	34	39
Total	18	39	57

These figures suggest there is still some way for employers to go in the Flintshire area in understanding the link between ACEs and Trauma Informed Practice and then implementing that awareness in creating workplaces which can adequately cater for affect employees.

In contrast, over 70% of these organisations have an environmental, social and governance strategy, which offers a potential area for employers to implement trauma informed practice in their workplace in the future.



Methodology

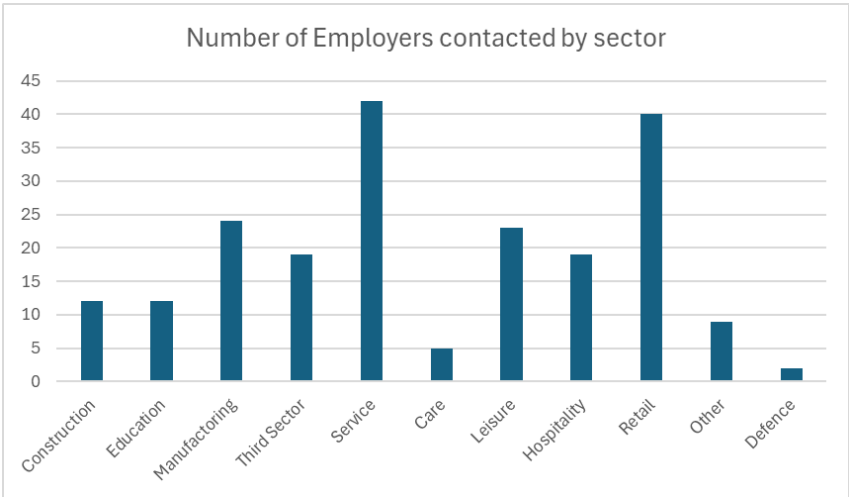
The Big Conversation Flintshire’s employers conversations launched late February and concluded in early April 2025. WeMindTheGap’s employability team’s intention was to meet businesses local to the county, through methods of organised meetings both in-person and on Teams, ‘door stepping’ for an in-person conversation, attending business networking events, contacting via email, social media platforms and LinkedIn, and over the phone.

In taking learnings from the Big Conversation in Wrexham in 2023 (Appendix 1), the WeMindTheGap team placed focus on speaking to people in person rather than sending emails or cold calling. The team dedicated to employer engagement consisted of 3 members for 1 day a week, 2 members for second day a week and 1 member for a third day, with others pivoting to support on this day. This took place over an 8-week period.

Our team designed a set of 22 questions (Appendix 2), aiming to draw both quantitative and qualitative information from employers. This questionnaire was created on WeMindTheGap’s Gappie Management System (GMS) using a software called SmartSuite, which enabled ease of data collection and collation. As a Welsh charity, it was important for us to include a Welsh language option, so the questionnaire was fully translated into Welsh for purposes of inclusivity.

All responses given by businesses were either inputted directly into the form by a representative or logged following a conversation by one of our team. During in-person conversations, our team followed the format of the questions found on the digital link.

Our team contacted 207 employers across Flintshire, outlining our ambitions and a request to meet with them, if they didn’t have time to meet in person, we asked that they complete questionnaire digitally by selecting either the English language or Welsh language link.



*Note that Other includes public sector, network communities, arts, journalism, farming and warehouses.

All businesses choosing to self-complete the form, did so using the English language link. We had no responses via the Welsh language link.

The findings above have been captured from the 57 engagements, in accordance with the order of questions and sections in the questionnaire:

1. About the Organisation

- Sector/ Industry
- Organisation size
- Proportion of the workforce below 21

2. Recruitment of 18–21-year-olds

- Methods of recruitment
- Entry level roles
- Role types available
- Entry Requirements
- Changes to recruitment

3. Strengths and Challenges

- Strengths
- Challenges

4. Retention and Progression

- Retention
- Reasons for leaving

5. Work Experience

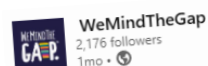
- Employees recruited with work experience
- Work experience offered

6. Supporting Young People

- Supporting young people to develop
- Transport Links
- ACEs Awareness
- Trauma Informed Practice

7. Further Opportunities

- ESG Strategy



Are you a Flintshire based business?

If so, we want to hear from you on your experiences of employing young people. Can you spare five minutes to complete this survey?
Why are we doing this?

In January, we worked in partnership with Wrexham University's Civic Mission Team to conduct the Big Conversation Flintshire, an appreciative inquiry into what life is like for 18- to 21-year-olds and how it could be improved.

We reached an amazing 515 young people who shared their voices, experiences and aspirations through recorded conversations and written responses.

As a local employer, we'd love the opportunity to learn more about your recruitment and retention of young people – the benefits and challenges faced by employers and what additional support could be provided.

Our ambition is to correlate insights from young people, employers, and community members to identify opportunities and support that will help young people thrive.

We'll be producing and sharing our findings across the county, with businesses, local leaders and other key stakeholders.

Your input will be anonymised to which industry or sector your organisation works in.

To complete the survey, simply click on one of the links below.

Thank you!

Cymraeg - <https://lnkd.in/eS2NHZSU>
English - <https://lnkd.in/eJbXWY7F>

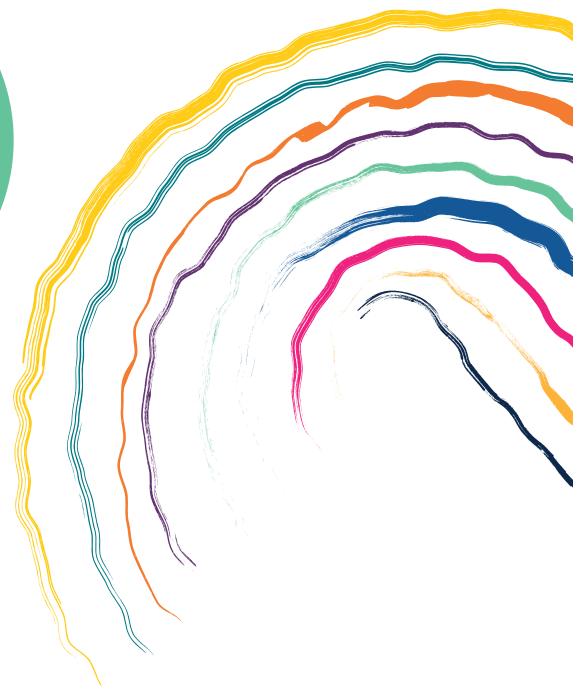
#bigconversation #flintshirebusiness #flintshireenterprise
West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber of Commerce North Wales Skills Portal |
Portal Sgiliau Gogledd Cymru

Images below show infographics shared on social media and LinkedIn.



We attended many networking events across Flintshire and North Wales to speak about the Big Conversation, our ambitions and to meet local employers. These included:

- Connecting Clywd
- Flintshire Business Networking Event
- North Wales FSB Networking
- Grwp Gogs / Cysylltiol Clwyd
- Flintshire Keep in Touch (KIT) Meeting
- Chamber of Commerce Round Table Networking
- Celtic Networking
- FLVC Children and Young Peoples Network Meeting



The impact of ACEs

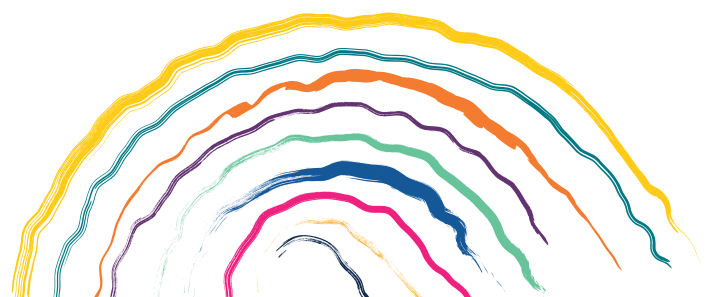


How common are ACEs?



The infographics above created by Young Minds, share that almost half of children and young people in the UK have experienced more than one form of adversity, and the impact that these can have in later life.

Our findings showed that 68.4% of employers that we spoke to were not aware of ACEs, and a different 68.4% hadn't heard of Trauma Informed practice. It could be said that through the lack of awareness, employers and community members could be at risk of misinterpreting or dismissing the behaviours of young people who have experienced trauma, and in turn broadening the inequalities gap further.



Appendix 1

<https://wemindthegap.org.uk/big-impact/?section=bigConversation>

Appendix 2

Employers Big Conversation Survey

English Big Conversation Questionnaire:

<https://form.smartsuite.com/sekeh46k/nsoCLOpM0R>

Welsh Big Conversation Questionnaire:

<https://form.smartsuite.com/sekeh46k/bAP4xRxnyv>

About You

1. Full name?
2. Email Address?
3. What is your role?

About Your Organisation

4. Name of organisation?
5. Sector/ Industry?
6. Location?
7. Approximately how many employees does your organisation have?
8. Approximately what proportion of the workforce is aged below 21?

Recruitment of 18–21-year-olds/ Entry Level roles

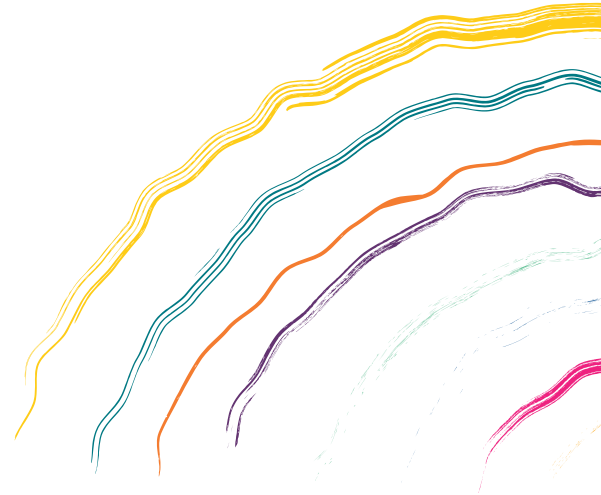
9. Where do you typically recruit 18-21s/ entry level positions?
10. Which of these typically apply to the entry level positions offered by your organisation?
11. In the past year, how many entry level positions have been offered by your organisation?
12. What positions are typically offered at entry level in your organisation?
13. What are the required qualifications for entry level positions at your organisation?
14. Has recruiting young people changed over the past five years? How?

Strengths and Challenges

15. What benefits do your organisation currently gain from employing 18–21-year-olds?
16. What challenges, if any, have you faced when employing this age group?
17. Do you have any further comments about strengths and challenges that are not mentioned above?

Retention and Progression

18. How long do 18–21-year-olds typically stay in your organisation?
19. What are their most common reasons for leaving?
20. Do you have any other comments about employee retention?



Work Experience

21. Do your entry level employees tend to have previous work experience?
22. Do you notice any difference between new employees with previous work experience and those who don't? How?
23. Does your organisation offer work experience/ placements?
24. Would your organisation consider offering work experience/ placements?

Supporting Young People

25. How does your organisation support young people aged 18-21 to develop?
26. What are the Transport Links to your organisation's site like?
27. Have you heard of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?
28. Are you aware of Trauma Informed Practice?

Further Opportunities

29. Does your organisation have an ESG strategy?
30. Would your organisation be interested in working with WeMindTheGap in the future?
31. How can WeMindTheGap support your organisation?
32. Do you have any other thoughts, feelings or experiences of employing 18–21-year-olds that you'd like to share?
33. How did you hear about us?

Appendix 3

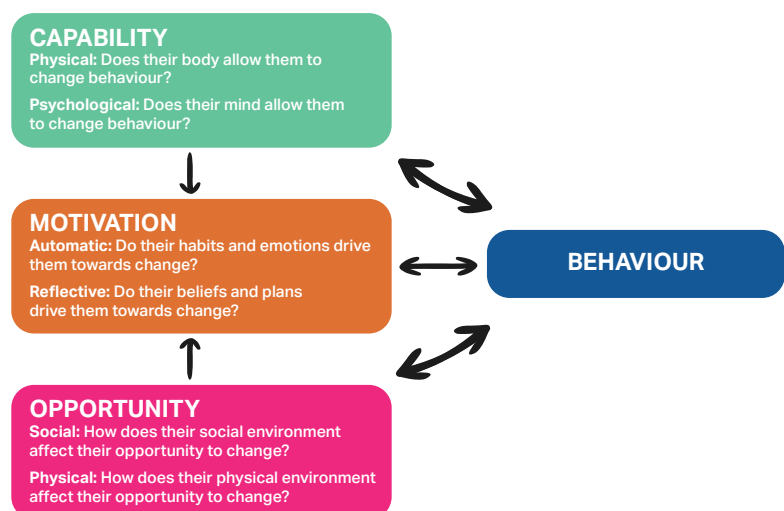
<https://traumaframeworkcymru.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Trauma-Informed-Wales-Framework.pdf>

Appendix 4

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/professional/resources/understanding-trauma-and-adversity/>

Appendix 5

The COMB methodology



**Become part of the Power of 10,000.
Join our village and pledge your
support to WeMindTheGap here:**



www.wemindthegap.org.uk

Registered charity: 1161504

