

Youth
Employment
Strategy
Partnership

*Together, delivering
better employment
opportunities for
our young people*

YES



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Introduction



Eleanor Laing MP

Helping young people into a worthwhile and rewarding career is key to the continued prosperity of our district. It takes a certain mix of specialist skills to bring business and employment expertise together with education to create a powerful and positive outcome. I have been delighted to work with the YES Partnership as they have taken up this challenge and I thank the dedicated volunteers at YES for the range of business, education and employment skills they offer for the benefit of others.

In a short space of time the YES Partnership has achieved a great deal and I have been privileged to have been part of the story so far. The innovation and professionalism of the 'Motivation' and 'World of Work' conferences which I attended are a testament to the hard work of the YES volunteers, not to mention the countless young people who have spoken to me about how YES has changed their career prospects for the better.

Talking to those involved in YES there are lots of exciting new ideas for developing and expanding their work in the future. One of their first initiatives was the Epping Forest Investors in Youth Business Awards which showcases and rewards those businesses, organisations and individuals who have made exceptional contributions to support young people into work. I am pleased and honoured to have been asked to help organise and host these prestigious events which have now become an annual occurrence.

My congratulations and best wishes to the YES Partnership and those who support its activities. I am sure that this cooperation will continue to flourish to the benefit of our children and our area.

YES Partnership

As its acronym implies, the YES Partnership is a voluntary organisation developing and implementing a Youth Employment Strategy aimed at improving the employability skills of young people. From a beginning, working with young people from Waltham Abbey and Debden, YES success has seen delivery grow to cover all the secondary schools in the Epping Forest district.

The YES committee, elected annually, has members with experience in business, education, the media, local and national government and those with a wider knowledge of the

local community. YES has also developed a close working relationship with organisations sharing similar aims and offering complementary services and support including the local Job Centre, local youth projects and Epping Forest College.

The services offered by YES are currently free to the young people whom it supports and this is made possible by the time and resources given by partners and supporters plus an element of fund raising and match funding.

YES organises an ongoing, calendar of events for young people designed to explore and address the common employability



issues raised by employers, schools and the young people themselves. These take the form of conferences held at the district's premier business and conference venue, the Waltham Abbey Marriott Hotel, at which the young people are welcomed as delegates.

The inaugural YES event introduced enterprise and entrepreneurial skills working with young people creating products and selling them on a market stall.

In all activities, the professional approach and business environment are designed to demonstrate the level of conviction and commitment being made by

YES and its partners to help each young person fully realise their potential and experience the world of work. The programmes that make up these events help young people to identify and plan career pathways, to discover the diverse range of support along the way and to bring them into contact with successful role models and local employers ready and willing to offer advice and guidance.

At the same time, for business, YES aims to provide a source of local, future employees who understand and can practice the many skills and attributes that successful businesses and professions in the area require.



Motivation Conference

In consultation with local schools and businesses, young people's poor employability skills have been identified as a major barrier to success in finding employment. Issues around confidence and motivation can arise where there is poor support at home or limited role models to inspire and inform. One solution is to give these young people an opportunity to be enthused by inspirational speakers and together focus on their futures and allow them to feel valued. This is what the YES Motivation Conference is all about.

In line with the increased number of young people participating the conference format is regularly revised and improved, using the professional skills of education and training professionals in consultation with the schools involved which together have identified the key issues to be addressed. The delegates continue to be selected, specially, to gain the most from the experience and support that is provided by adult facilitators. The issues are covered by three themes, which are explored in turn throughout the day with interactive talks, workshop sessions, films and fun activities.

The first theme looks at different types of job and work environments with delegates identifying preferences as they consider the pros and cons of a variety of options and match job descriptions to corresponding job titles. The second theme focuses on the delegates themselves exploring their individual aspirations, strengths and hopes and fears to reveal potential career areas and produce a personal action plan. Rounding off the morning's activities is an opportunity to question a panel of inspirational local people with diverse backgrounds and successful careers. The panel then joins the delegates and their facilitators for lunch.

The afternoon theme builds on the morning's work culminating in a Life Road-Map identifying a goal or destination with milestones along the way. This introduces the importance of the right qualifications and training, where to find advice and help, how to deal with obstacles, and tools that might be helpful along the way such as coaching, mentoring and financial advice. Finally delegates are asked to complete an evaluation form before being presented with certificates by an invited dignitary and a short photo session.



WOW Conference

The World of Work (WOW) Conference is designed as a follow-on from the Motivation Conference. The day is split into two programmes. In the morning presentations, workshops and other activities look at the job market and explore practical ways to search for a job, avoid common pitfalls and create applications that have the best chance of succeeding. After lunch delegates have the opportunity to meet with local business people who have been specifically matched to their career aspirations. For some, this will be one-to-one and for others, in groups of two or three.

The format for the morning mirrors the motivation conference with delegates in small groups and adult facilitators. Evaluation of a ice-breaking team activity, linked to a later questionnaire, gives the delegates an idea of the types of skill-sets they would bring to the workplace and an indication of the sorts of job roles they could consider. A presentation on the world of work turns a number of preconceptions completely on their head and gives an insight into the smart way to find the right vacancies and apply for them successfully. It also covers the pitfalls and common

mistakes that lie behind rejection and particularly focuses on the increasing use of social media both as a recruitment tool and a vetting tool. In practical sessions, delegates re-evaluate their CVs in light of what they have learnt and by comparing poor, average and excellent examples. They then work on their personal statements looking at impact, immediacy, relevance and tailoring rewriting this tailored for their ideal job. Delegates and facilitators are joined at lunch by an invited dignitary and the business people they will be meeting in the afternoon.

The afternoon sessions consist of the delegates meeting the business people and enjoying productive discussions about the world of work they have chosen for their careers. Any delegates with a second career option can elect to visit two business people if demand allows. At the end of the day, delegates are asked to complete an evaluation form before being presented with certificates by the invited dignitary.



 Epping Forest

INVESTORS IN YOUNG PEOPLE
BUSINESS AWARDS 



Working with local business

IYP Business Awards

The first YES Investors in Young People Business Awards took place in 2014 with Eleanor Laing, MP for Epping Forest, as patron. The awards are designed to recognise and reward those in the local community who are investing in young people and their journey into employment. At a prestigious awards evening, winners are announced in a variety of categories covering local employers, employees, apprenticeships and those in the voluntary and not-for-profit sector. Nominations come from both the public and local schools, college and job centre.

YES hope these annual awards will create increased awareness and inspire positive action amongst local business to help young people onto the first rung of successful careers. Guest of Honour at the first awards evening, Iain Duncan Smith MP, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, summed it up when he described the YES awards as a brilliant idea and went on to say "I do hope it goes on year after year because more and more businesses need to be celebrated here: they are the key to getting the economy back."

Breakfast for Business

Awareness of the issues and opportunities around youth employment and the activities of the YES Partnership is the aim of regular Breakfast for Business events run at business and partner venues across the district. These offer an opportunity for business leaders and other opinion-formers from the local community, to meet with young people and staff from the local schools and college and learn how they can become involved in supporting or benefiting from YES and its program of events.

Support is invited to offer such positive contributions as work experience, mock interviews, sponsorship for YES activities and, of course, employment opportunities for local young people.

Themes at recent breakfasts have included young entrepreneurs, the launch of the youth section of the local chamber of commerce and the advantages of apprenticeships. They have also been used to launch such initiatives as the IYP Business Awards.

Meet Harry



Charitable Status

During 2017 YES Partnership decided to apply for, and was granted, charitable status and is now a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This decision has allowed YES to access funds previously unavailable and create a platform from which to expand its provision developing young people's skills, capacities and capabilities across South East England.

Following representations from businesses, schools and councillors, YES is offering Motivation and World of Work (WOW) Conferences beyond Epping Forest District with the first of its expanded provision taking in schools in Harlow.

The model developed by YES is

unique and in step with regional and national efforts to forge closer links between businesses and education to improve the career aspirations of young people and raise employability skills for their move into the world of work.

YES is constantly reviewing its provision to ensure it is giving the best and most up to date support and information. It is always happy to welcome new businesses interested in supporting its work and volunteers willing to bring their skills to the organisation or support conferences as facilitators or sector employer representatives. Contact us to find out more, or attend one of our Breakfast for Businesses or support our Investors in Young People Awards by nominating someone worthy for one of our awards. Details are on our website.



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Examples of training we offer free of charge:

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This list is not restricted. Almost any training that you usually pay for, we may be able to help with and deliver for free.

To be eligible, employees will need to undertake an English or maths assessment

To qualify for free training, the employee must be:

- 16 or over
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The programme typically last 6 weeks and consists of either online or face-to-face support with tutor support

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