

FUTURE OF THE REGION - REGIONAL YOUTH ORGANISATION ENGAGEMENT THURS 22 SEP 2022



Right across the region of South West Wales there are people, businesses, organisations inspiring the next generation to be the best they can be.

There are so many opportunities for young people but do they know what's available to them? How can we work together to make sure that every young person in our region realises the possibilities for them here in South West Wales?

We invited businesses and organisations working in this sector to come together, share what they do, look at the gaps and co-create solutions so that every young person in South West Wales can be empowered. This report captures the ideas, challenges and work that organisations across the region are doing.

FORMAT OF THE EVENT

To set the scene of the event, we asked a brief question to attendees to consider and discuss amongst themselves in smaller breakout sessions. These responses were fed back to the wider group in order to identify themes, frame the conversation and find out what work organisations were doing already.

We asked....

“Why is this conversation important to you?”



“We’re very conscious that young people have had a tough time in recent years and need all the help they can get. There’s a need for role models and help for young people to see what they could be.”

“There’s a need for connection amongst projects and young people and finding a way to do it more effectively.”

“Role models can show young people a vast range of different possibilities. It’s an important message and we need more of it.”

“They are the future of our economy and communities, we have to make sure they thrive otherwise the next generation is really going to struggle.”

“There are so many fantastic businesses, projects happening and world-class research going on in the universities. Young people are not plugged in enough these things that are on our doorstep.”

“How do we tackle the problem of young people living in rural areas who have got transport issues on top of everything else? How do we ensure they have access to these connected networks? A lot of young people are saying to us that they feel at a greater disadvantage if they don't feel connected to employers or organisations.”

“What others have said about young people being cut off and left in the cold has really resonated with me. They don't feel part of the world. We're seeing children, teachers and schools really struggle after going through the past two years.”

“We're passionate about helping children to develop an entrepreneurial mindset and provide them the opportunities to be able to develop soft skills, life skills, problem-solving, innovation, team work and creativity. It doesn't matter what route they take, those skills will be important.”

THEMES

- The importance of helping young people to build skills, especially from underrepresented groups.
- The future is uncertain and the challenges may be unfathomable to us. How can we build the resilience of young people?
- We need to be better connected and collaborate in order to help young people to figure out what's next.
- Developing an entrepreneurial mindset from a primary school age can be important to get children thinking outside the box.
- Empowering them to express themselves, use their voices and help shape the future of their communities.
- We need to support and champion what young people themselves want to do. What small interventions can we make to enable them to lead the stuff that they want to do?
- Enabling young people to see what's out there.
- There's a need for connection and positive role models.
- We'd like to retain the talent of our young people in the region.
- We need to look at bridging the gap between what we're hearing from young people and how we can involve the private sector to try and help as much as possible.
- Transport issues can prevent young people from accessing opportunities and projects that could otherwise help them.

We asked....

“What would you love to see? Share your ideas”

“How might we collaborate better?”



Are there ways we can all build and maximise the impact of our work, projects, ideas and resources through better collaboration and joining up of everything that's happening? Are there better ways of addressing the gaps?

“One of the things that struck me is that there's all of these amazing things going on, but there's no one central point where we can find out what's going on for young people, or have these links to other organisations. These meetings are great, I'll write notes but I might forget or send it into the chat and I won't see it again. It would be great to have a central 'noticeboard' or social media group rather than having to specifically search for it.”

“I just wanted to tell you that It is very difficult to get into primary schools, we have been working in this space now for many years, we have found that asking schools we are working with to introduce us to others who they think would benefit from our work can be a great way in. Also the local council sends a newsletter to primary schools each week that could include information about your offering you could support schools with.”

“The new curriculum offers a great opportunity to make new connections - e.g. creating Active and Informed Citizens is a great carrot to tempt school decision makers with.”

“Not one project can triage. Collaboration is fine in small settings, but you're always going to miss out on projects and people.”

IDEAS & THEMES

- There seems to not be a one central point to find out what's going on.
- We need to ensure that young people are part of the process and encourage co-creation.
- We need young people voices in this sphere and to co-create solutions.
- We need to be led by them and not place the burden on them.
- A monthly bulletin/newsletter for people working in young people space. There could be a 4theRegion newsletter specifically for youth projects.
- Contact Swansea Council to see if they would collaborate on their monthly newsletter that goes to headteachers.
- Use the 4theRegion website as a place to host a youth project directory.
- Alternatively, use 4theRegion as a signpost to a dedicated website.
- Create a digital space to connect and share ideas.
- Dedicated Discord or Slack server, or a Facebook group.
- Keeping a dedicated space would be a monumental task to ensure it's up to date and correct.
- Even if we did have the platform, it's about understanding about how we turn it into how can we support people? How do we collectively do this?
- Podcasts to showcase what people are doing and what they hope to be doing.
- Quarterly meetings for networking and building relationships.
- Meet the employee/organisation events targeted to young people.
- An event for young people to find out what projects are available, ask questions and find out what careers are out there.
- Employers should take advantage of schemes that help set up placements and apprenticeship.
- Educate employers on the benefits of working with young people.
- Having more time available to collaborate with others and build networks.
- Connecting projects with schools. Opportunities to bring schools in and share.
- Working with primary schools can be challenging as they're overwhelmed from the effects of the pandemic.
- Holistic ways to reach out to 16 - 25 year olds.
- How do we ensure that we're also reaching disconnected and underrepresented groups of young people?

We asked....

“What would you say to young people?”

“You don’t need to have it all figured out as soon as you leave school.”

“Thank you and encourage their positive attributes, we could learn a lot from them.”

“I would say something like: “There is plenty of support and advice out there, it's not as scary as you may think to approach and ask...Just take that leap and open up that world of opportunities to you! Have confidence and that you can achieve, it may not feel like it initially but trust yourself and others around you wanting to help!”

“As a young person myself, I understand the struggles of living in south west wales. I myself have struggled immensely with education and work life in the last 3-4 years due to the pandemic and other issues, and just the fact that so many people are working to better this is just amazing.

I think the main thing is to understand that you don't have to have it all figured out, everyone has something to offer and everything happens for a reason.”

“Get comfortable with having plot twists in your story.”

“Your future is not pre-determined - give yourself the time and space to explore every opportunity and pick what speaks to you rather than other people”

“You know you better than anyone, we're here and we're listening.”

“Whatever you have to say is worth hearing.”

“Do something which makes you happy.”

“YOU GOT THIS! YOU ARE AMAZING! YOU DON'T HAVE TO HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS NOW . DO WHAT YOU ENJOY AND YOU WILL FIND YOUR OWN PATH”

“Walk the unwalked path. Think outside the box. Don’t follow the crowd. Be innovative.”

“Have belief that there's genuine people that are creating the genuine opportunities you're looking for, especially with what you're passionate about. You are the future & we'll do whatever we can to help you in a positive contribution because we want you to succeed.”

*“Experience all you can, don't worry if it doesn't work out the way you planned there are several ways to get to your goal and there are people that can support you on your journey. Life isn't a nice tidy path, it's a series of stepping stones!
Also as a parent I think I would say, pop your head up from your Smart phone for 5 minutes and communicate through a conversation and take in your surroundings, and get clear your head of the social media 'noise’”*

“Don't be put off by things around you. Stay true to your dreams and your visions.”

“You can be anything you want to be just believe and keep your dreams and vision in your mind.”

NEXT STEPS

With so much to discuss, we are keen to keep this conversation going. Join us on the 14th December 2022 at 10am for the next Future of the Region Event!

[Sign up for free via Eventbrite here.](#)

PROJECTS & INFORMATION

2B ENTERPRISING

[2B Enterprising](#) works with Businesses and Schools to create valuable partnerships, introduce opportunities and develop entrepreneurial skills of young people.

Key contact: Sue Poole, sue@2benterprising.co.uk, 01792 277694

BIG IDEAS WALES

[Big Ideas Wales](#) provides support and resources for young people looking to become entrepreneurs

Key contact: Samantha Dearden, Samantha.dearden@bigideaswales.com
Emma Beddoe, emma.beddoe@bigideaswales.com, 07482 246899

DEVELOPMENT BANK OF WALES

[The Development Bank of Wales](#) offers young entrepreneurs flexible funding options, from repayable loans from £1,000 to larger equity investments. They are hosting an [informal event](#) on the 12th October where young people are invited to visit and find out about the support that The Development Bank of Wales, Big Ideas Wales and Business Wales offer.

EDEN COLLECTIVE / SOCIAL BUTTERFLY

Eden collective is an ecosystem of Marketing and Design consultants who work with private and public sectors in Wales. They motivate local businesses and individuals to refocus their attention back on marketing by providing outsourced, unbiased, effective consultancy and management in Wales. They also offer tailored social media courses for those looking to enhance their knowledge.

Key contact: Amy Price, Amy@tsbm.uk

GOWER COLLEGE SWANSEA - BETTER JOBS BETTER FUTURES

Gower College Swansea's employability programme Better Jobs, Better Futures assists students to find employment during and after their studies. We also support individuals in Swansea who are under-employed or unemployed to secure sustainable employment.

Zoe Williams organises employers to come in and speak to students about career opportunities and help to run employability programmes for those not wanting to enter Higher Education and support students and clients with employability skills.

Key contact: Zoe Williams, zoe.williams@gcs.ac.uk

NATIONAL MUSEUM WALES

[National Museum Wales](#) offer a youth engagement programme, offering a mix of paid and voluntary roles, training and workshops for young people across their sites focused around heritage, identity, climate and opening up pathways to careers in heritage and the arts. They are also keen to make partnerships and collaborations with other youth focused organisations. Their youth-led [Instagram page](#) showcases current projects and ways to get involved.

Key contact: Cerian Wilshere, cerian.wilshere@museumwales.ac.uk

Annie Fenton: annie.fenton@museumwales.ac.uk

ORIEL SCIENCE (SWANSEA UNIVERSITY)

[Oriel Science](#), Swansea University's shopfront in the city centre, runs free school workshops and is open to the public.

Key contact: Chris Allton, orielscience@swansea.ac.uk

PLANED CWBR YOUTH

[PLANED CWBR Youth](#) is a project working to improve connections and outcomes for young people in their communities focusing on town and community councils

across Pembrokeshire. This project also works with schools and colleges to increase democratic literacy amongst young people and to help young people find their voice and support them in using it.

As mentioned the [Youth Manifesto](#) young people from Pembs have been involved in creating is designed to be a useful resource for any youth groups / professionals working in the youth sphere - its possible for you to take the basic document and adapt it to meet your needs. Get in touch with Tom Moses or Maisie from PCNPA to find out more.

Key contact: Tom Moses, tom.moses@planned.org.uk, 07810228526

PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL PARK

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park offer many projects that young people can get involved in, such as a Youth Rangers scheme, Youth Committee and many others. Find out more [on their website](#).

Key contact: Maisie Sherratt, maisies@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk, 07773788205

RT TRAINING AND SKILLS

[RT Training and Skills](#) is a training provider based in Swansea and supports businesses within South Wales with their training needs. They offer qualifications in Health and Social Care, Childcare, Play, Employability, Management, Mental Health and Resilience.

Key contact: Rhian Davies, Rhian@rttrainingandskills.co.uk, 07816655523

SKILLS BUILDER PARTNERSHIP

The [Skills Builder Partnership](#) includes 600 schools and colleges, 200 impact organisations and 100 top employers - working collectively towards the mission that one day, everyone will build the essential skills to succeed. Their work is underpinned by the Skills Builder Universal Framework, which shows how to build essential skills at every stage of life. These eight skills are: Listening, Speaking, Problem Solving, Creativity, Staying Positive, Aiming High, Leadership and Teamwork.

Key contact: Bethan Jeffers, bethan.jeffers@skillsbuilder.org

SWANSEA BAY CITY DEAL

The Skills and Talent project aims to deliver a regional solution for the identification and delivery of the skills and training requirements for all City Deal projects.

Working alongside partners from the private sector, higher and further education, schools and the third sector, the project team will map out gaps in current provision and establish the skills and training needed for students, teachers and lecturers both now and in future.

The Career Pathways officer is hoping to work on improving work experience to raise aspiration and skill proof young people for emerging sectors for future jobs. Contact: AEdmunds@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

SWANSEA COUNCIL

Swansea Council's Children and Young people's Partnership and Involvement Coordinator can be contacted on the following details:

Key contact: Carys Jones, carys.jones@swansea.gov.uk 07929719528

SWANSEA MAD (MUSIC, ART, DIGITAL)

Swansea MAD is a grassroots, inclusive youth and community charity intolerant of discrimination and injustice. Swansea MAD works co-creatively with young people, the community and partners to facilitate free projects to build digital skills.

Key Contact: Fikayo Ilori, fikayo@swanseamad.com, 07956 391865

VOCAL EYES CIC

[Vocaleyes](#) is a platform for collective action to inspire ideas, promote collaboration and help groups to really make a change and move ideas forward. Young people have been heavily involved in using this tool previously.

Key Contact: Susan Rodaway, hello@vocaleyeyes.org

XL:UK RADIO

[XL:UK Radio](#) is an independent Swansea-based radio station who are passionate about providing opportunities for young people to enter the media sector and gain new skills.

Key contact: Abid Hussain, xlukradio@gmail.com

(WELSH GOVERNMENT) YOUNG PERSONS GUARANTEE

The [Young Person's Guarantee](#) provides under 25's in Wales with the offer of support to gain a place in education or training, find a job or become self-employed. A document outlining the Guarantee's aims [can be found here](#)

If anyone would like to get in touch from the representative from this meeting, please contact Emma. She is currently on secondment at Welsh Government and working within the employability & skills division with a focus on the Young Persons Guarantee.

Key Contact: Emma Bengher, emma.bengher@gov.wales

YMCA SWANSEA

The Y-Futures project aims to bring young people together and provide and promote increased levels of accessible opportunities in and around the rural wards. The project works to find youth-led solutions to climate change.

Key contact: Zubdha Iftakhar, yfuture@ymcaswansea.org.uk