



## End of Year Report

December 2015

A year of working for young people; a plan for progress in 2016

With thanks to the Youth Employment UK Patrons



The logo for Pearson features the word 'PEARSON' in white, uppercase, sans-serif letters centered within a dark red rectangular background.

The logo for plotr features the lowercase letters 'plotr' in a grey, sans-serif font.

A green circular logo with the text 'Discover Your Future' in white, sans-serif font.



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# Youth Employment UK – A year of progress

## To our Supporters a word from Laura-Jane

### A YEAR OF PROGRESS

As we reach the end of 2015, I wanted to take the opportunity to reflect upon what has been a tremendously exciting year for Youth Employment UK. It has also been a time of real, positive progress for young people. The General Election brought a renewed spotlight on youth issues, and employment became an emphatic priority during the campaign. We were particularly pleased to welcome manifesto commitments from all parties: including significant pledges from the new Government.

### YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICES DELIVERED TO THE HEART OF GOVERNMENT

Perhaps the most significant development for Youth Employment UK as an organisation came in July when we were asked to become the Secretariat for the new All Party Parliamentary Group on Youth Employment. I was delighted to be able to bring Youth Employment UK's unique expertise to the forefront of the UK policy-making.

Equally I saw a precious opportunity to bring youth voices right to the heart of Government. All too often we see youth organisations, business leaders and policy-makers charge down a new pathway to improving youth employment, without any input from young people whatsoever.

That is not how we operate at Youth Employment UK and our new role with the APPG has allowed us to bring our most valuable asset, our young people to the meeting table with MP's and Ministers.

### CHALLENGES REMAIN

Although we welcome any increase in youth employment, we remain committed to tackling what we believe to be structural obstacles facing young people as they transition from school to work, including a continuing lack of impartial and inspirational careers opportunities, and by bottlenecks created by changes in the economy. There also remains a growing skills gap between what employers tell us they need, and those skills gained by young people at school. Young people themselves tell us that they want to be productive and participate in the society and economy in which they live however, they need our support and the support of Youth Friendly organisations to get there.

### LOOKING AHEAD

2016 presents exciting opportunities for Youth Employment UK to drive positive change in the youth employment landscape. A priority for the coming year will be a long-term campaign to increase the quality of careers advice and inspiration. Youth Employment UK will be seeing a standardized simplified system to ensure that young people receive the support they are entitled to.



We will continue to grow our Youth Voice and youth-led services through our pioneering Ambassador programme, seeking more inspirational young people to deliver support to their peers in their own communities.

Youth Employment UK aims to increase our network of partners throughout the business sector, charities and Government agencies to continue our successful collaborative work; all with the ultimate goal of transforming the experience of young people as they leave education and enter the world of work.

Finally, I must thank our supporters who have been so key to our work this year; Our Ambassadors, Advisory Board Members, Members and Patrons, thank you all.

Laura-Jane Rawlings

Founder and Chief Executive



Some of the Ambassadors and Advisory Board Members of Youth Employment UK



# The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Youth Employment



## BACKGROUND

All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) are informal cross-party research and issue-based interest groups. They are run by MPs and Peers, often with the support and operational oversight of individuals and organisations from outside Parliament.

In the summer of 2015 Youth Employment UK was asked to join the APPG on Youth Employment as the Group's Secretariat, reflecting Youth Employment UK's position as a leading expert on the variety of challenges young jobseekers face.

The APPG is chaired by Chloe Smith MP, with Membership from across both Houses of Parliament. The primary objective of the APPG is to promote youth employment in all its forms and the role of young people with the economy; to ensure young people's voices are heard; to highlight the need for quality opportunities; and to share best practice.

## PROGRAMME OF WORK

As part of the APPG's Programme of Work, it is committed to a regular review of:

- Statistical baselines and trends
- Government policy
- Local and regional innovation
- International comparisons
- Organisations to work with
- The involvement of businesses and young people in the work of the APPG

## HIGHLIGHTS

In July, the inaugural meeting of the APPG agreed its terms of reference and the scope of the Group's work. We were delighted to see a significant level of cross-part support in this critical issue. Many members expressed their determination to tackle youth unemployment, as they are so acutely aware of the problem in their own constituencies.

In September, we welcomed Lizzie Crowley of the Work Foundation, who gave evidence to the Group about the structural causes of youth unemployment. We also heard from Andrew Taggart of the Found Generation, who spoke to the Group about existing policy tackling youth unemployment.

In October the Group focused on the role and quality of work experience to coincide with Work Experience Week. The APPG heard from the CEO of Fair Train who gave evidence on the importance of quality work experience schemes to boost the chances of young people securing stable employment once they leave school.

The November meeting looked closely at careers education. The APPG was delighted to welcome a careers teacher to speak about their experience and learned about best practice from the London Ambitions Framework. Laura-Jane also presented the history of careers education in the UK, and young people shared their own insights.



## LOOKING AHEAD

In 2016, the APPG will capitalise on the success of its early work, and will begin in January with a comparative study of the international landscape of youth employment.

The APPG will be drafting recommendations for the relevant Select Committees and Ministers on areas of concern based upon the broad range of evidence given.

Following the creation of a new Select Committee that draws from both the Department of Education and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the APPG will seek to deliver its recommendations to them on an ongoing basis.

The APPG's AGM will take place in June, and will coincide with an End of Year Report from the Group on its work to date.

In the interim, the APPG will continue to highlight best practice working with Youth Employment UK Members and seek collaboration. Youth Employment UK is keen to hear from potential partners and practitioners; details of the APPG and how to get involved can be found on its website:

[www.appgyouthemployment.org](http://www.appgyouthemployment.org)



Some YEUK Ambassadors attending an APPG meeting

# The Youth Friendly Employment Conference

## HIGHLIGHTS

The Youth Friendly Employment Conference brought together leaders and decision makers from across business, the charity sector and Government, and crucially placed young people at the heart of the day. We were lucky to have one of newest Ambassadors, Patrick Cantellow, blogging live from the Conference. He gave us some great insights.

*"I have been a Youth Ambassador for over 3 months now, and this was my first ever event with Youth Employment UK. I have been getting to know the other Youth Ambassadors on online discussions, and it was great to finally meet a number of them.*

*I learnt a great deal about the current state of the unemployed and how hiring works. The organisations that spoke throughout the day recognize that to keep in touch with the new modern workforce, they too need to modernize their recruitment strategy.*

*After the most delicious Salmon I have ever eaten there was a short speech from MP Priti Patel, who told the delegates how the government is adapting to a changing job market by beginning schemes with the JobCentre Plus, Schools and Colleges alike.*

*"Rhiannon, Laurence and myself held a workshop on 'Developing Young People', which worked with the delegates in explorative ways by explaining issues and how their teams would come up with solutions. Particular examples include the creation of new social media hubs to extract those hidden from employment, and ensure young people's wellbeing needs are met.*

*I would like to thank the sponsors for making the event possible, I and many others had a great time and learnt a great deal and I am looking forward to 2016!"* Patrick Cantellow Youth Employment UK Ambassador

Conference workshops were provided by London Youth, the Recruitment and Employment Confederation, My Kind of Future, and Youth Employment UK.

We were able to hear from leading employers and youth employment experts, including:

- Jameela Quraishi, Development Manager, Steps Ahead Mentoring Programme, CIPD
- Beth Gardner, Chief Executive of Fair Train
- Charlotte Hill, Chief Executive of Step up to Serve
- Iain Salisbury, Chief Operating Officer of Learn Direct
- Neil Burke, Regional Development Officer at Youth Focus North East
- Caryl Cotton, Education & Skills Specialist, Global HR for National Grid
- Emma Judge, Interim Head of Student Recruitment at Ernst & Young
- Sandy Macdonald, Head of Sustainability at Standard Life



## THE VIEW FROM GOVERNMENT

We were particularly pleased to welcome the Employment Minister, the Rt Hon Priti Patel to Conference for her keynote address, focusing on the remaining challenges facing young people as they leave education, and the role of Government in tackling these challenges.

Visit our [site](#) to watch the conference video and read the full speech from the Minister.



Rt Hon Priti Patel – Employment Minister

*“Youth Employment UK has been a valued partner on the “WE can” youth campaign.*

*Through that and your other work you have inspired many young people, and helped to equip them with the skills and experience they need and employers value.*

*I’d also like to thank Laura-Jane Rawlings, founder of Youth Employment UK, for your leadership and long-standing dedication to young people.*

*I know that you believe, as do I, that it is only through tackling these issues together and listening to young people that we will be able to make positive change” Rt Hon Priti Patel – Employment Minister*



## YOUTH FRIENDLY AWARDS

Employers from across the UK who have committed themselves to supporting young people were recognized at the annual Youth Friendly Employers Awards, which marked the culmination of the Youth Employment Conference. This year we were proud to reward the efforts of businesses of all sizes:

### THE AWARDS CHOSEN BY YOUTH EMPLOYMENT UK AMBASSADORS

- Youth Friendly Large Employer 2015 – Birmingham Children’s Hospital NHS Trust
- Youth Friendly Medium Employer 2015 – Aspire Sports Health & Fitness Ltd
- Youth Friendly Small Employer 2015 – Humantopia

The Awards also give Youth Employment UK the opportunity to reward and recognise the brilliant voluntary work of our Youth Ambassadors. Every Ambassador that joins Youth Employment UK does so with the desire to help us tackle youth unemployment, to give something back to their community and to develop their skills and experience.

### THE AMBASSADOR AWARDS

- Youth Ambassador Representative 2014 – Hugo Garvey
- Youth Ambassador of the Year 2015 – Jack Welch



Humantopia with their Award presented by Plotr CEO

Jim Carrick-Birtwell

*“Whilst the picture of youth employment is improving in the UK, there are still significant challenges facing young people as they leave education and prepare for employment.*

*I am delighted to formally recognize the efforts of our award winners in implementing Youth Friendly practices that make a real difference to their young employees.*

*Youth Employment is proud to put youth voices at the heart of our work with employers, charities and the Government. Our inspiration Youth Ambassadors deliver those crucial messages to their peers, employers and right to the heart of Government; Hugo and Jack are this year’s very deserving winners of the Ambassador Awards.”* Laura-Jane Rawlings, Founder and CEO of Youth Employment UK



## A YEAR AS A YOUTH EMPLOYMENT UK AMBASSADOR

*"I support Youth Employment UK because I've had a lot of difficulties in finding employment, and fed up with the Government not knowing about the difficulties you people can in finding work.*

*I was enthusiastic to join Youth Employment UK to ensure young people have a voice with the Government to prove we are actual young people with real lives; we are all individuals with differences about why we can't get a job, or our backgrounds. Without talking to us, youth unemployment will never change."* Ben Fisher, Youth Employment UK Ambassador



*"Youth Employment UK is absolutely vital in helping young people to get into employment, they have me and so many others skills, confidence, networks and crucially a voice in government, business and other arenas.*

*Young people are the future and we're not getting the support from education or government so having Youth Employment UK is invaluable."* Jenny Mullinder, Youth Employment UK Ambassador

*"Being an Ambassador allows you to share your passion with others and it provides some fantastic training and networking opportunities.*

*Being a Youth Employment UK Ambassador has opened up many opportunities to me to grow, learn and develop and it's a privilege to represent such a fantastic passionate youth organisation."*

Shakira Martin, Youth Employment UK Ambassador

*"I have attended numerous Parliamentary events to influence decision makers, as well as being able to shape Youth Employment UK's own positions on a number of issues.*

*This year alone, I have set on a steering group on a number of conferences based on employment, which culminated in a Convention for Youth Employment itself. I am now also the proud award holder of Ambassador of the Year 2015!!" Jack Welch, Ambassador of the Year 2015*



## 2015 A YEAR OF HIGHLIGHTS

Youth Employment UK has had one of its busiest year to date, it's difficult to summarize all of our activity. We have attended hundreds of hours of events, written more than 300 articles and pieces of content for our site and our Youth Ambassadors have volunteered over 2,000 hours to support our work.

A major highlight included the Patronage support given by: NCFE, OCR, Pearson and Plotr without which Youth Employment UK would have struggled to achieve many of its 2015 successes.

Our Community and Youth Membership numbers also soared in 2015, as we provide a wider range of services and indeed return on investment for those organisation committed to supporting young people.

Every day counts in our fight to tackle youth unemployment, but here is a look at some of the activity and events we have been involved in.

January	Launch of the Youth Employment UK Careers Education Report
February	Ambassador hosted Youth Employment Event in Worcestershire
March	Supported National Apprenticeship Week with an Ambassador speaking at the FE Week Conference
April	Chaired and supported the Youth Employment Summit
May	Youth Employment UK recruited its 1 <sup>st</sup> Apprentice
June	Impact Report and launch of new website
July	Youth Employment UK became the Secretariat to the APPG for Youth Employment
August	DWP WE Can campaign launched, partner by Youth Employment UK
September	Supported Global Goals which included a write up by Huffington Post
October	Ambassadors joined the Cabinet Office #JobsHack
November	Ambassador presentations at the Youth Employment Convention
December	Annual Youth Friendly Employment Conference and Awards



## 2016 A YEAR FOR GROWTH

2015 saw Youth Employment UK take significant steps forward; our Ambassadors were inspirational representatives at events across the UK, with some contributing to conversations with members of the Government.

Youth Employment UK confirmed its position as the leading expertise on young people and their journey from education to employment with its appointment as Secretariat to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Youth Employment.

In 2016, we seek to build on this year's successes and drive the debate forward to secure meaningful change to the experience of young people seeking work.

### CAREERS EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

Youth Employment UK will be running a national, year-long campaign to overhaul the needlessly complicated procedures and practices of careers education in the UK. Involving all members, partners and young people, this campaign chosen by our young members who identified it as the most urgent priority for the coming year.

It will coincide with, and ultimately feed into, an inquiry launched by the new Committee on Education, Skills and the Economy which is set to look at issues such as the quality of current careers advice, the effectiveness of careers advice in supporting people into apprenticeships, and how careers advice in schools and colleges can help match skills with the needs of the jobs market.

### GROWING OUR POLITICAL VOICE

With increased activity at a national Government level on the issue of skills and youth employment, Youth Employment UK will seek to capitalize on our expertise to bring to bear influence on these key policy areas. Working in close partnership with our young members, we will set out our position on crucial policy points that impact young people.

Through the APPG, we will continue to deliver a youth voice directly to the heart of Government. We will go further this year, seeking to build working partnerships with MPs and Peers who share our passion for transforming the experience of young people leaving education, and lobbying for change at a statutory level where necessary.

### YOUTH AMBASSADORS

As ever, Youth Employment UK is looking to welcome young people to join us as Ambassadors; in 2016, we will establish regional teams who are better equipped to plan events and support their peers in their own communities. Through these teams, we hope to bring a truly national youth voice to our work, delivering vital insight to policy-makers.

### NEW CORPORATE AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

In early 2016, Youth Employment UK will launch a new Ambassador scheme for our Corporate Members. The Corporate Ambassador Programme will allow members to select inspirational young



employees from their own staff to spend a year on a development programme with Youth Employment UK.

The new Ambassadors will receive comprehensive training in vital business skills such as; presentation, careers learning, public speaking and team building. They will then use this training throughout the year by planning and running events across the UK to motivate and support other young people who are beginning their search for work.

In addition, for every Corporate Ambassador sponsored by their employer, Youth Employment UK will be able to sponsor another Ambassador who is currently not in education, employment, or training (NEET) to join them on the development programme.

Full details of the programme and the launch will follow in the coming weeks.

## COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

We recognize that businesses of all sizes often want to ensure that they adopt best practice for their young employees, but are sometimes unsure what steps they can take, and if their current operations provide an environment that is conducive to recruiting young staff.

To help businesses feel confident in their approach to young people, we will continue to work with organisations to support best practice, provide advice and information through our Community Membership Platform.

## YOUNG PEOPLE

We will be recruiting more young people across the UK to join the free Membership Services offered by Youth Employment UK. Our Young Members benefit from a range of services which will continue to be added to in 2016. Young people can engage with Youth Employment UK to find the help and support they need to progress, Young Members can also share their own experiences and ensure that they are represented at the highest levels.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

To find out how you can get more involved in the work of Youth Employment UK in 2016 please contact:

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