



M A Y 2 0 2 4

APPRENTICE RESEARCH

Background

Two Harrow organisations were commissioned to run a focus group with young people around the topic of apprenticeships – with a focus on construction and healthcare. The aim was to understand some of the barriers to entry and opportunities.



My Yard

My Yard are a community organisation working with the community on the Grange Farm estate in South Harrow. They interviewed 17 young people aged 17-21.

Ignite

Ignite are a youth organisation working to empower and transform vulnerable young people at risk of exploitation and gangs. They interviewed 5 young people through a partnership with Harrow College. We also interviewed their youth worker as part of the research.



Young Harrow Foundation

Young Harrow Foundation is a local charity supporting the youth voluntary sector. They have facilitated the research, and conducted analysis around the digital communications of Harrow's apprentice offer



Headlines

- 01** There is a mixed response about receiving info at school, some say they have received information. However, most young people still don't know where to look for information or support locally. There is an opportunity here to go deeper via community groups.
- 02** A big driver for young people is **salary** and **ambition** – but the research demonstrated a perception from young people that construction and NHS have low salaries so it doesn't align with their values and expectations.
- 03** Social media (particularly TikTok and Youtube) is now a key research tool for young people and where most young people say they would welcome content and information about apprenticeships in Harrow.
- 04** Many young people find it hard to access Xcite, and the webpage could be improved to better support and inspire young people. There is an opportunity to link to partner websites.
- 05** Some young people feel the workload of studying and working at the same time would be too much and impact their social time.
- 0** How is the apprenticeship offer linked into the new SEND strategy around employment – there is no information available on inclusive apprenticeships from Harrow.

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Going Deeper

Headline 1.

Some of the young people said they had received information via school about apprenticeships, yet the majority felt that wouldn't know where to look for one.

Observation: Some of the young people said they had received some kind of information through schools, typically through an assembly or PSHCE. Yet, some still felt they wouldn't know where to go to find one locally, and some young people were also asking questions of the researcher about what an apprenticeship is.

Observation: Some schools seem more university focused, and therefore the experience and information a young person is exposed to around apprenticeships can vary depending on the school ethos.

Observation: Some young people felt a physical event / fair specifically for apprenticeships would help promote awareness among young people.

Observation: When asked if they feel the NHS and Construction sectors advertise their opportunities enough all participants answered "no"

Observation: Some young people suggested they would welcome information and guidance from their trusted youth worker. The youth work organisations involved in the research support the view that more can be done in partnership to support young people on a deeper level.

Recommendations

Review the school strategy and content – is it engaging, is it going deep enough, is it challenging their misconceptions, is it selling it in line with their values, and crucially – is it leaving young people with a clear sense of **where to go** and **what to do** if they are interested in applying or finding out more.

- How are Xcite engaging with community groups – beyond flyers and newsletter? They are key / trusted people in many young people's lives and could be a good route and space to meet young people where they are comfortable and engaged. Can Xcite workers spend time working with young people in spaces and places they are – e.g. community youth organisations.

Quotes from young people

It would be cool to get taster sessions, or some sort of apprenticeship fair to learn more about them. I think the same amount of energy that goes into promoting university should go into apprenticeships.

They need to go into schools and colleges more

Can you go to sixth-form and do an apprenticeship?

Schools naturally push you into higher education,

Only found out after school after covid. I was confused and amazed at same time because no-one ever told me about them.

Yeah, who wouldn't want to get paid to learn. It would also be better for me because college didn't work out for me, but I don't really know where to begin to look for one (apprenticeships) that have what I want to do. Then there's also not knowing what I want to do, so I'm kinda stuck really. If I knew what I wanted and where to look I am certain I'd be doing an apprenticeship right now instead of not really doing much at the moment.

I think how it's presented is the problem, it's not very inspiring.

I remember when I was younger, youth workers from Ignite would come around. Those type of places could share more about apprenticeships.

No I don't know where to go to look for apprenticeships

I did have apprentice talks at school, but it was quite brief and no where near as much info as applying for university

Headline 2. *A big driver for young people is salary and ambition*

Observation Young people are driven by salary and ambition, and many that were involved in the research felt the salary and earning potential in the construction and NHS sectors did not align with these values.

Observation Some young people with experience in the construction sector found that some roles are very poorly paid, and some felt the pay doesn't reflect the amount of labour.

Observation Research commissioned by Morgan Sindall Construction found 1/5 young people perceive the construction industry as being poorly paid (<https://insights.morgansindallconstruction.com/story/are-we-gen-z-ready/page/4/2>).

Observation This is Harrow 2023 found that 17% of young people said they worry about their family running out of food because of lack of money or other resources. There is a backdrop of poverty in Harrow that possibly further fuels the ambition and desire for higher earnings.



I would do construction instead of plumbing, I don't really want to clean toilets.



We are given a ton of work to do and were not paid what they were worth. They are packaged in a way to look like they are beneficial, but we are not paid our worth.



My mum works in the NHS and she has never had a pay rise. Why would I go for job that wouldn't pay me that much. I saw her and key workers go through the pandemic, it was so hard. I would not have the heart to go through that.



I wanted to do an electrical apprenticeship but they were seriously underpaid. The labour and pay don't match up sometimes.



My mum would prefer me to get an education not an apprenticeship. To get a job, get a house - education is important.

Recommendations

- Promote leadership potential and salary progression in construction and NHS to young people.
- More face-to-face events with community groups and opportunities for young people to see behind the scenes at these partners to see the different type of careers on offer.

Headline 3. *Social media (particularly TikTok and Youtube) is now a key research tool for young people*

Observation: When asked where they would look for information about apprenticeships, many young people mentioned Tik Tok. During a deep dive interview with 20 year old young person, she described how her and her friends use the platform as a research tool, not only entertainment content. This is backed up in desk research which can be found here:

<https://www.emarketer.com/content/gen-z-prefers-tiktok-google-searches>

Observation: The content on Instagram from Xcite looks visually consistent, which is good, but it doesn't feel youth centric. The number of posts about apprenticeships is very low, and there isn't a highlights section about apprenticeships. The audience on this platform also feels heavy sector led, rather than young people themselves.



Tiktok and YouTube are the new google, that's where I go to research something because I will get bite-sized visual content about it."



"They should post jobs on Instagram and TikTok, that's where I'd see them"

Recommendations

- More youth centric comms on the channel and more apprenticeship specific content
- More collaborative digital comms with partners in construction and NHS
- 'Apprentice Champions' – young apprentices create content (e.g. 'day in the life' / take over Instagram for a day) etc that can go on your socials.

Headline 4. *Many young people find it hard to access Harrow's apprenticeship support*

Observation During a focus group young people said they found it hard to reach the team at Xcite, and they felt it is promoted more as an adult service, not a youth one.

Observation A review of the website (detailed over the following pages) found that Xcite details are hard to find. There is no signposting to contact them.

Observation Currently the website is not linked with youth centric partners (e.g. Young Harrow Foundation jobs and training portal) and apprentice partners to promote vacancies, support and inspiring content

Observation Youth worker suggested that many young people would benefit from more face-to-face support to access the website / portal in a space that's familiar and trusted - e.g. community group spaces. more face-to-face support to access the website / portal in a space that's familiar and trusted - e.g. community group spaces.



The problem with Xcite is that no-one can reach them."



The website is not designed for us, I find it dull and hard to use.

Recommendation:

- Website suggestions in next chapter.
- Access point promoted at every opportunity.
- Get out into the community.

Headline 5. *Some young people feel the workload of studying and working at the same time would be too much.*

Observation: Some young people felt the pressure of working at the same time as studying and taking exams would be overwhelming. This seemed to be from young people who were not taking an apprenticeship. For those that we spoke to who were currently studying an apprenticeship, they never listed this as a challenge.

Observation: Some of the more negative content on TikTok about apprenticeships touches on this topic – the scale of work when you are doing work and a course .



No, I wouldn't apply for an apprenticeship because I would prefer to just study as I think having a job and to study at the same time where I have to be committed to both would be overwhelming for me.



No, I would not apply for an apprenticeship, because it is a way to take away more of my social life and make money whilst attending school. I want to be able to have my own time.

Recommendations

- Developing messaging around this to use when promoting apprenticeships in Harrow would be helpful
- Some 'myth-busting' content

Interview Spotlight

Youth organisation, Ignite

Troy Norbert, Operations Manager, and former employment project manager with Ignite

We really believe in the potential and benefits of apprenticeships. In the context of the cost of living crisis, and the expense of going to university, apprenticeships are a great offer.

The challenges we've seen are young people's perception, and in some cases experience, that salaries in construction especially, are low. This is a huge barrier. Many young people don't know about the different types of opportunities there are in construction. There's also more work to do to make girls and young women feel this is a space for them.

I'd love to see Harrow get more creative with how we promote these opportunities to young people. Yes it would be good to see more work in schools and more on social media. But I believe the real opportunity here is to collaborate more closely with community groups, like Ignite and others, who are working closely with young people and have built up trust. For example, they could place an Xcite worker in a community space like Ignite on a set day every week. This is a great opportunity to work with young people and give them the face to face support they need, in an environment that they feel comfortable in. They could also be harnessing people on their team who are / have been apprentices to support and inspire young people.

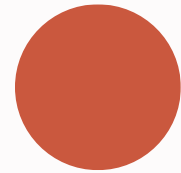
It's all very well referring young people to a portal or website, but they will need some support to access it. Someone to talk them through it. Even coming to spaces like the Civic Centre can be a barrier for some of our young people.

The other big thing we've seen is managers needing more training to be able to work with young people and get the best out of them and develop their potential.

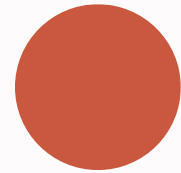


Website Review

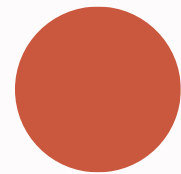
Website Online Review



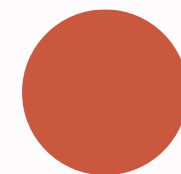
If there is a focus on NHS and Construction - these should be on the landing page



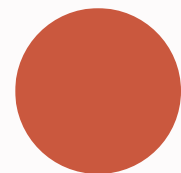
Case studies - video / visual led. Help young people see themselves in this opportunity



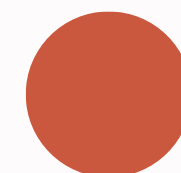
No mention here of Xcite team or contact details for someone who has an enquiry and would like to talk about apprenticeships



The national tool it links to isn't very user friendly



No user friendly support resources



No link to partner website with apprenticeship offers and information - e.g. Young Harrow Foundation / business partners recruiting apprentices

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

Log in / Register

SERVICES

Home | Jobs, careers and training | Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a real job with training. They enable you to earn while you learn, obtain recognised qualifications, and job-specific skills as you go.

You can apply if you:

- live in England
- are over 16 and not in full time education

Apprenticeships take between one and four years to complete. They cover 1,500 job roles in a wide range of industries. This includes social care, engineering, veterinary nursing and accountancy.

Taking on an apprentice?

Employing an apprentice

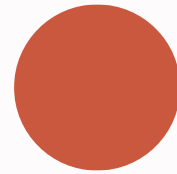
Finding an apprenticeship

For further advice on apprenticeships visit:

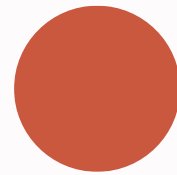
[National Apprenticeship Service](#)

Alternatively, follow #ThinkApprentice on [Twitter](#).

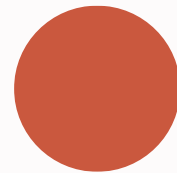
Website Online Review



How can you read more about the apprentice opportunities on here - no ability to click through and no guidance what to do with the reference or how to get more info



No specific info or promotion of apprenticeships on this page



No contact details

The screenshot displays the 'Job opportunities' page on the London Borough of Harrow website. The page features a navigation bar with 'Log in / Register' and 'SERVICES' options. Below the navigation, there is a 'Job opportunities' section with a sub-section 'In this section' containing links for 'Job opportunities' and 'How Xcite can help you into work'. A prominent message states 'Registration paused' with a warning icon, indicating that registrations are currently paused. Below this, there is a list of 'Latest Full Time Jobs' including positions like 'Administration Officer' and 'Management Accountant'. The page also includes a 'Starting Work Checklist' and 'Follow us' social media links for Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. At the bottom, there is a 'Latest Part Time Jobs' section listing various roles such as 'Cleaner', 'Road sweeper', and 'Volunteer to cater'. The page is powered by 'LEVELLING UP' and funded by the 'UK Government'.

Example 1



Clearly laid out and clear language



Benefits highlighted



Point of access - register / eligibility check / telephone number



Latest opportunities promoted



Branded 'Camden Apprenticeships' (we haven't linked it to the Xcite brand on our Harrow apprentice page)

The screenshot shows the 'Camden Apprenticeships' website. At the top, there are logos for 'GOODWORKCAMDEN' and 'CAMDEN APPRENTICESHIPS'. Below the logos is a navigation menu with links for 'Opportunities', 'Employers', 'Case Studies', 'Support', 'News & events', 'About us', 'Schools', 'Contact us', and a 'Login' button. The main heading is 'Apprenticeships at Camden'. There are three main sections: 'What is an apprenticeship?' with a definition and a photo of a woman holding books; 'Benefits of an apprenticeship' with a bulleted list; and 'Eligibility' with a 'Check eligibility' button. Below these is a 'Latest apprenticeships' section with a 'View all' link and a table of opportunities. At the bottom, there are two registration buttons: 'Register as an apprentice candidate' and 'Register as an Employer'. The footer contains contact information and links for 'Accessibility Statement' and 'Change cookie preferences'.

GOODWORKCAMDEN **CAMDEN APPRENTICESHIPS**

Camden Apprenticeships > Portal

Opportunities Employers Case Studies Support News & events About us Schools Contact us Login

Apprenticeships at Camden


What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship combines practical training in a paid job with at least 20% study time, leading to a nationally recognised qualification.

Apprenticeships are available in a wide range of subjects, and from levels 2 to 7. The level depends on the complexity of the role.

Apprenticeships can offer flexible hours or be part time.

The length of an apprenticeship varies according to both the level and the individual circumstances of the apprentice.



Benefits of an apprenticeship

- A decent wage
- A recognised qualification
- Support on request throughout your contract
- Improved job prospects

Eligibility

Check if you meet the eligibility criteria to apply for our apprenticeships

[Check eligibility](#)

Latest apprenticeships

[View all](#)

| Opportunity | Type | View |
|--|----------------|------------------------------|
| Apprenticeship Information Session | Apprenticeship | View details |
| Camden Living Paralegal X2 | Apprenticeship | View details |
| Lime Customer Engagement and Event Support | Apprenticeship | View details |
| UCL Help Desk Operative | Apprenticeship | View details |

Registration

Register as an apprentice candidate

Register for our apprenticeship service

[Register](#)


Register as an Employer

Find out how to use our free service to source local talent!

[Register](#)

GOODWORKCAMDEN **Contact us**

Camden Apprenticeships
Telephone: 020 7974 8778 / 020 7974 6474
Email: apprenticeships@camden.gov.uk
[Accessibility Statement](#)
[Change cookie preferences](#)



Example 2



Talks about the benefits



User friendly - vibrant / imagery / colourful



Offers case studies and resources



Inclusive apprenticeships - links to their SEND commitment

WORCESTERSHIRE APPRENTICESHIPS

WA Account Login/Register

Apprentices –
Earn while you learn
and get a real qualification



THE BENEFITS Why Apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships give you the opportunity to work for a real employer, earn a real salary and gain a real qualification whilst gaining valuable workplace skills and experience.

THE RIGHT APPRENTICESHIP FOR YOU

What types of Apprenticeship are there?

There are four types of apprenticeships you can apply for depending on your current skills and qualifications:

- 1 Intermediate Level Apprenticeships Level 2**
(equivalent to 5 GCSE Grades A-C)
- 2 Advanced Level Apprenticeships Level 3**
(equivalent to 2 A levels)
- 3 Higher Apprenticeships Level 4 and 5**
Level 4 is equivalent to the first year of an undergraduate degree or a Higher National Certificate (HNC) and Level 5 is equivalent to a foundation degree, or a Higher National Diploma (HND).
- 4 Degree Level Apprenticeships Level 6 and 7**
Level 6 is equivalent to a bachelor's degree and Level 7 is equivalent to a master's degree.

Earn while you learn

All apprentices must receive the appropriate national minimum wage.



A real qualification

All Apprenticeships must be at least 12 months long and lead to a national qualification that is respected by employers around the world.

Case Studies
See our apprentice case studies

Useful links & resources for apprentices

WA Account
Set up a WA Account to access all apprenticeships available and receive new opportunities.

Inclusive Apprenticeships

An Inclusive Apprenticeship is a flexible, bespoke programme designed for those with additional learning needs and disabilities. Almost all Apprenticeships can be made accessible and having additional needs shouldn't restrict people's employment opportunities.

An Inclusive Apprenticeship is for learners with a current or historic Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), Learning Disability Assessment (LDA) or Statement of Educational Need (SEN), inclusive apprenticeships ensure adjustments are made to make them accessible.

More information about Inclusive Apprenticeships can be found on the Worcestershire County Council Skills 4 Worcestershire Website:

[Apprenticeships and SEND | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Example 3



FAQs - great resource to have as we found there were lots of questions even in interviews with young people



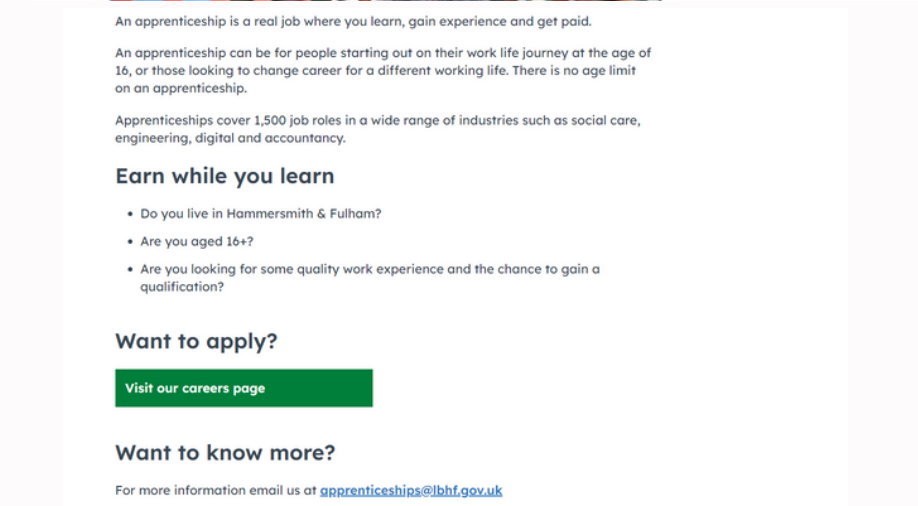
Benefits play into things that young people care about - salary / ambition - (get to management / board level) and qualifications



Real people's experiences



Clear path to apply / find out more



Other Research

<https://www.protrade.co.uk/blog/state-of-construction-apprenticeship-report-2024/>

<https://insights.morgansindallconstruction.com/story/are-we-gen-z-ready/page/1>

<https://www.aboutapprenticeships.com/reports/young-people-survey/>



THANKS

youngharrowfoundation.org