

Unlocking Potential

9 May, 2018 – Exeter.

Evaluation

Unlocking Potential in the South West was a conference hosted by Petroc as part of Empowering Enterprise, a Building Better Opportunities project jointly funded by the Big Lottery Fund and European Social Fund. Empowering Enterprise supports 18 to 24 year olds who are not in education, employment or training to overcome their barriers and access appropriate opportunities.



80

80 people attended the event from a range of partner organisations, other support organisations, colleges and local employers.

How to be a Craftivist: the art of gentle protest

After an introduction about the Empowering Enterprise project from Huw Davies and Bill Blythe, the opening session was a talk by Sarah Corbett, founder of the Craftivist Collective. Sarah spoke about the value of craft activity as a form of gentle activism, which can give voice and purpose to people, particularly introverts.



78% of those providing feedback thought the Craftivism session was 'Excellent' or 'Very Good'.



"Craftivism – inspired choice of keynote"

Workshops

There were four workshops available during the day, and participants could attend two. They covered a range of topics that might affect 18 to 24 year olds. These were:

- Digital Skills For Young People;
- Get Inspired, stories of youth engagement;
- Illegal Money Lending;
- Understanding the Benefits Systems for Young People.



All workshops were considered 'Excellent' or 'Very Good' by over 75% of those providing feedback.



"The make-up of the event was excellent as were the workshops..."



The overall experience of Unlocking Potential was valued by attendees. The venue, catering and organisation were all highly rated. The buzz of conversation throughout the day focussed on how to support and enable young people make positive steps towards training or employment.



“There is a lot of stigma about young people that needs to be overcome.”

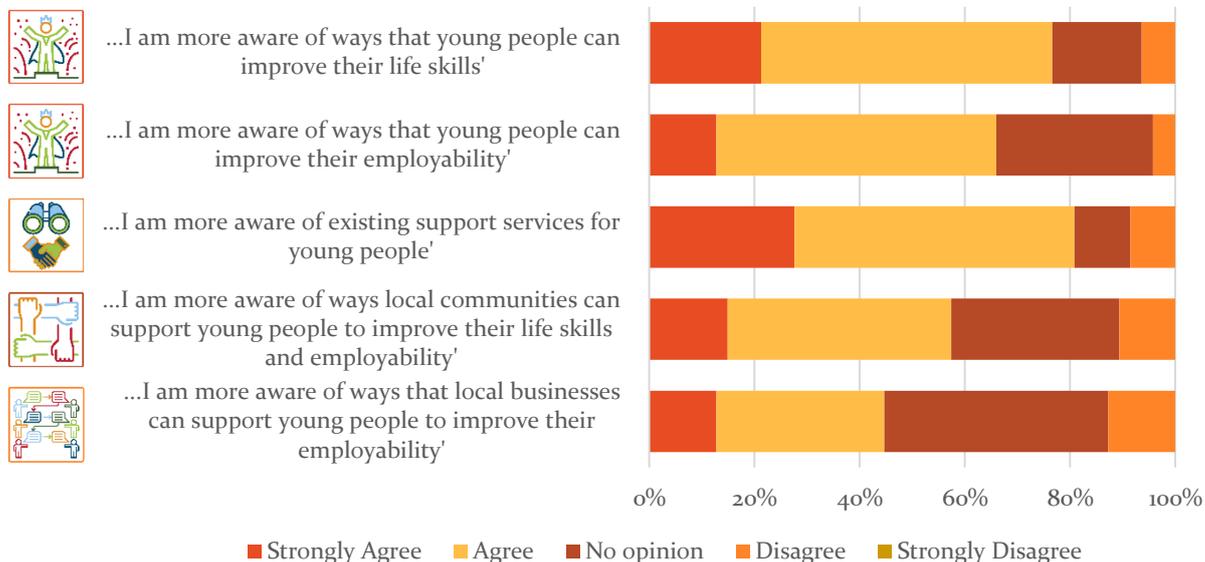
Impact

Empowering Enterprise has four clearly defined outcomes that Unlocking Potential in the South West contributes towards achieving. To understand the conference’s contribution, specific questions were included within the conference feedback form.



The first explored the mode of transport attendees used to attend the conference. The venue was chosen to be accessible by, and encourage the use of public transport, car sharing, cycling and walking. Whilst more detailed analysis of this data will be undertaken by Planet First, 64% of those attending arrived by a more sustainable mode of transport.

In addition, attendees were asked specific questions to ascertain to what extent the conference contributed to the projects identified outcomes. Overall, attendees felt the conference contributed to all four of the outcomes:



Empowering Enterprise Outcomes



Young people participating in the project have improved their employability, entrepreneurial and life skills.



Existing support services are more visible and accessible to young people and their communities and are more sustainable.



Communities and businesses are more cohesive and resilient.



Project partner organisations have increased their capacity and capability to support young people through a more joined-up approach, sharing of best practice and access to training and resources.