Kailo DARTINGTON SERVICE DESIGN LAB

Diverse Jobs, Opportunities and Careers: Summary of Key Learning, Insights and Recommendations

Theme/Social Determinant
Employment and Careers

The Context/Early Discovery Research
One of the key themes that emerged from the early discovery phase of Kailo was young people being inspired and being able to access a diverse range of jobs, opportunities and careers that matched their interests, passions, strengths and goals.

We found that young people felt restricted with regards to different career and job opportunities they could pursue and access, and often felt limited to jobs/careers in hospitality, agriculture, tourism, leisure and retail. This was particularly true for those who did not want to/could not move away from Northern Devon and those who weren't interested in pursuing higher education.

This theme highlighted challenges at multiple levels:

1. The individual level. Young people having low self-esteem, self-confidence, self-worth and the motivation and inspiration to pursue jobs/careers that would be meaningful to them.
2. The family/community level. The networks and influences around young people are not always supportive of young people pursuing interests, jobs or careers outside the norm.
3. Systemic level. It was felt that there is an absence of diverse jobs and careers that are visible and known to young people in Northern Devon.

The Challenge
How might we inspire, support, and connect young people into a diverse range of jobs, opportunities and careers?

Key Learning/Insights from Deeper Discovery

1. Lack of Person-led approach

- Young people feel their priorities for finding employment aligned with their interests is undermined by different priorities of schools and their families.
- Families don't feel confident to support their children to pursue areas of employment they are not familiar with
- Families who have experienced insecure employment, or low-socio-economic families where poverty is more prevalent, want to be confident their child is finding 'secure' employment.

2. Ineffective delivery of careers advice and support in schools

- Schools focus is on exams, academia and pushing young people towards the academic route, rather than taking a person-led approach to supporting careers advice and guidance.

- Schools career support, advice and guidance is often not relevant to the local area, not person-led and delivered ineffectively.
- Schools are not connected into local employers from diverse jobs, opportunities, and careers.

3. Lack of Transport options

- Transport in North Devon was identified as a key barrier to young people being able to access diverse opportunities. Young people do not often have access to private transport, and public transport can be unreliable, the routes and timetables are not relevant/do not work for what young people are trying to access.

4. Lack of Inspiration, Role Models, and Awareness of different jobs opportunities and careers

- Young people felt that there is a lack of awareness, knowledge and inspiration for different jobs, opportunities or careers in Northern Devon, meaning young people don't know about different opportunities they could be going in to. They don't know anyone who works in different fields/sectors/roles, and there aren't necessarily any role models for some young people (e.g. ethnically diverse role models, role models in particular job roles/sectors, relatable role models)
- It's not about 'what you know' it's 'who you know'. The need to be connected into particular networks or social circles to be able to access particular opportunities was highlighted.

5. Employers not valuing diverse skills and experiences.

- Employers in Northern Devon don't always value diverse skills and experiences of young people, so there often aren't jobs available that suit these skills and experiences. This was felt particularly by neurodivergent young people.

Our Response and High-Level Recommendations

Our vision is to create an approach and system that supports all young people to experience different opportunities, experiences, jobs and career possibilities in safe spaces, so that they feel comfortable to explore new things in the future and end up in a job they want to do, and that they care about.

In order to do this, we need to:

- Create a system that is youth-centred, and youth led.
- Create a co-ordinated and replicable approach.
- Develop learning opportunities for employers and the wider community.
- Influence how decisions are made at a local level.

Below are key areas that have been identified by our co-design group as having potential to positively impact young people in this area. The key areas highlighted below are not suggested to be implemented in isolation. Through our work, we have identified that it is necessary for this to be a whole-system approach and commitment, to effectively change young people's experiences and outcomes in this area.

Whole System

- Develop a connected and committed cross sector approach to inspire, support and connect young people into diverse jobs, opportunities and careers.*

Youth/Community

- Create safe spaces for young people to explore interests and develop new skills related to careers and jobs.*
- Mentoring available to young people to support them to reach their goals.*

Schools:
- More awareness of different courses/opportunities at different colleges
- Change of attitude/mindset in schools to support 'non conventions' jobs.
- Schools better able to support young people with diverse needs.
- Improved careers advice and guidance that is person-led, and relevant to the local area.*

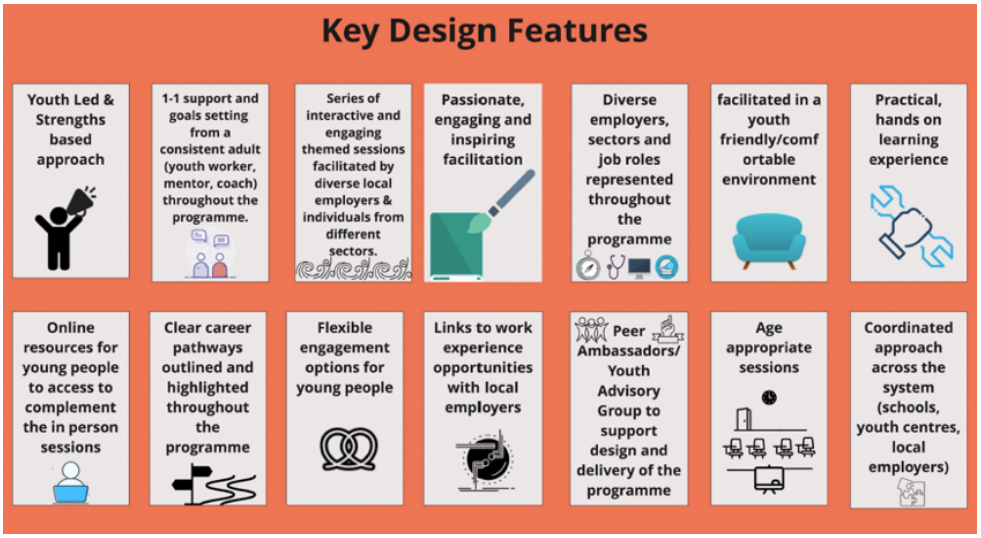
Employers
- Better connection between young people/schools and local employers.*
- Make more opportunities available and people more aware of local opportunities that are less visible and known about*
- Different routes into employment are made available for young people (e.g. having more apprenticeships available)

Parents
- Parents given more support, awareness and education on different opportunities for young people and how they can support their children.
- Parents supported to break the generational cycles of attitudes and expectations put on young people with regards to jobs and careers

Kailo Co-design Group: Youth-Led Solution:

The Kailo co-design group have worked to design an intervention for young people that focuses particularly on the areas starred* above:
- Creating safe spaces for young people to explore interests and develop new skills.
- Making mentoring available to young people to support them to reach their goals
- Improving careers advice and guidance that is person-led, inspirational, motivational and relevant to the local area.
- Creating better connections, relationships and interactions between young people and local employers that are inspiring and engaging.
- Young people becoming more aware of local opportunities

The key design features for this intervention are highlighted in the diagram below.



Next Steps

We are now working with local organisations and partners to be able to design these up in more detail, and to implement these ideas in Northern Devon. If you work in Northern Devon and would like to get involved/support with implementing some of the different aspects of this work, we'd love to hear from you! Get in touch with Katie: katie.potter@dartington.org.uk