



BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Made possible by:

UK YOUTH

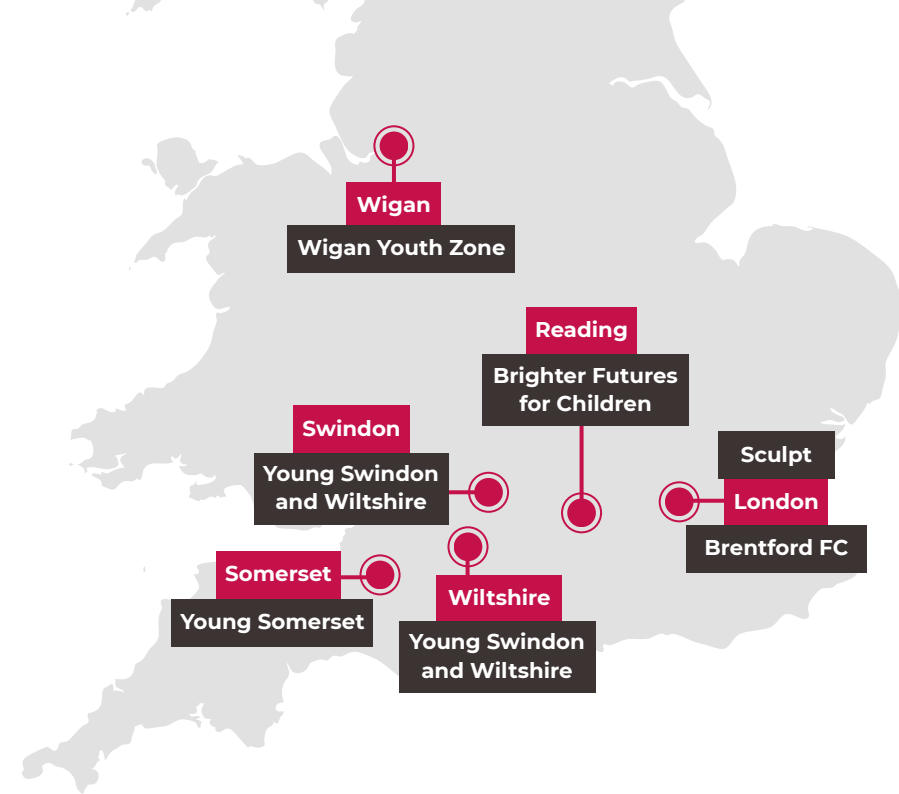
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PARTNERS

Building Connections

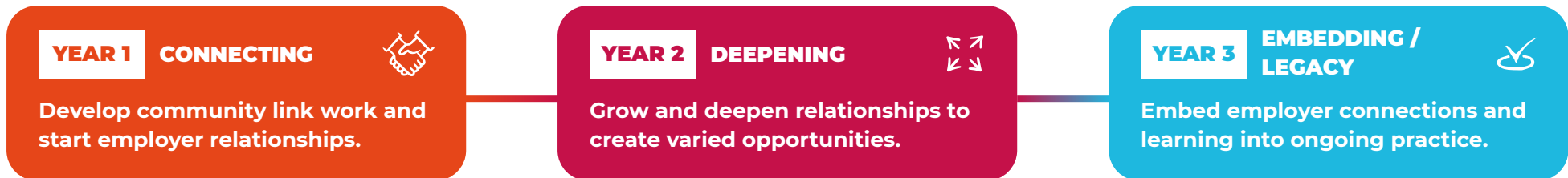
Connecting young people, youth workers and employers to create pathways into work.

Building Connections is an employability programme for young people aged 16–25. Delivered by UK Youth and funded by Coca-Cola Europacific Partners (CCEP), the programme supports youth organisations to build stronger relationships with local employers and create meaningful opportunities for young people to explore careers, gain experience and move closer to employment.

Today, Building Connections is delivered across London, Reading, Somerset, Swindon, Wigan and Wiltshire.



The programme is broken down across 3 years:



Core components



Community link worker



Employer networks



Events



Support for delivery



CCEP volunteers

In the last year, Building Connections **reached 2,959 young people.**

Overall, across four years, Building Connections has reached an incredible **7,315 young people.**

Programme impact to-date

 **7,315** young people reached

35%
participants experiencing NEET at start 

3,675 
young people attended events

 **10,087**
employability connections made

1,017
World of Work days attended 

74% 
event attendees felt more confident about applying for a job

362
 young people supported into paid work



Year 4: Delivery, highlights and evaluation

Six youth organisations are currently in the second year ('Deepening') of their three-year Building Connections journey.

During this phase, they strengthen and expand relationships with local employers, turning initial partnerships into meaningful events, employability activities and ongoing opportunities that support young people on their journey towards employment.

Examples of activity include; workplace insight days, work experience, CV writing workshops, mock interview, peer mentoring, employer sessions and 1:1 and group work

2,959 young people reached in year 4

239 young people started paid employment

1,612 young people attended events

What the data shows

- Year 4 **reached more than double the upper target of 1250** young people.
- Current Youth Organisations recorded **1,347 young people supported through delivery and 1,612 through events.**
- **59% of young people were aged 16–18**, highlighting support at **key transition points.**
- **Gender representation** was close to the target split **aligned with NEET statistics.**

Further opportunities created



666 World of Work days attended — a major increase on previous years.



120 young people took part in **work experience.**



138 young people started **volunteering roles.**



Employer connections are translating into tangible next steps.



Really good how the programme brings in other people from external companies, it opens up routes to other opportunities through them.



Participant



I really benefited from meeting different companies and professionals. I learnt about roles I didn't know existed, for example, sales.



Participant

Key Insights

Young people:

76% felt more confident applying for a job

93% reported at least one improvement in employability understanding

90% would encourage peers to attend a similar event

Young people valued the opportunity to explore different pathways, connect directly with employers and discover real opportunities, all within a youth-work setting that made development feel enjoyable, motivating and positive.

Youth Workers

Build effective employer connections



Clearer tactics: warm introductions, tailored communication, specific asks and efficient follow-up.

Support quality employment steps



Greater knowledge of local services, clearer needs insight and more creative use of networks.

Create positive impact



Each Youth Organisation has at least one effective local employer connection, creating work experience, jobs and broader horizons.

Youth workers are more confident at translating employer relationships into opportunities.



I walked away not just with skills, but with a stronger sense of who I am and how I want to show up in the world.



Participant



It gives young people a really good insight into a workplace without having to go and do work experience or commit to something that's two weeks.



Sculpt



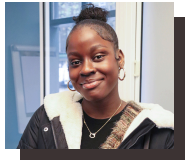
Building Connections: 2026: Young Somerset - Event & Partnership Showcase

Case study summary

Tailored support built confidence, practical skills and clearer routes into work or learning.

Manon

Wigan Youth Zone



Starting point:

Lost confidence after repeated job applications and did not know where to start.

Support:

With support from youth workers, Manon took part in career exploration, leading her to apply for a volunteering opportunity with a local business. Her skills impressed the employer, who offered her a Level 6 marketing apprenticeship with a degree.

**Marketing apprenticeship
+ degree route**

Andre

Brentford FC Community Sports Trust



Starting point:

Out of school, unsure of next steps and previously involved with Youth Justice Services.

Support:

Person-led support allowed him to develop his skills and gain confidence. He has now secured a job as a peer mentor in the same Youth Justice service he previously benefitted from.

Peer mentor role in Youth Justice Services



"It's just truly changed my life, all you've been able to offer me." - Andre



Legacy - Lasting impact beyond the programme

Even after funding has ended, the programme continues to make a difference. Here's what our partner, Together As One, who completed delivery in Year 3, shared about the lasting legacy of Building Connections.

Rob, Youth Worker at Together As One

Hear his thoughts:

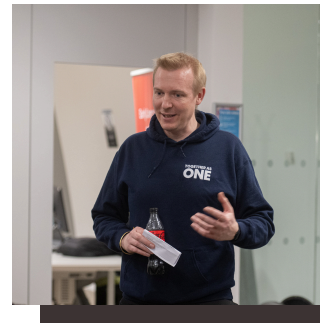
"Building Connections was a game-changer for our employability work. It helped us establish relationships with employers that endure to this day, and it significantly deepened our understanding of how to foster connections within our locality.

CCEP and UK Youth have been brilliant sources of support throughout; even after the formal programme ended, they continued to provide insight and gave their time to talk to young people.

Furthermore, the careers fair for young people with SEND has become a staple of what we do, and plans are already well underway for the 2027 event - an amazing legacy of our involvement in Building Connections.



"CCEP and UK Youth have been brilliant sources of support throughout." - Rob



**Building
Connections:
Young Swindon +
Wiltshire - young
person thoughts)**

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