

RECRUITING YOUNG PEOPLE INTO ADULT SOCIAL CARE

**A GUIDE FOR
PROVIDERS**





This guide has been developed to support adult social care providers in attracting the next generation of care workers.



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WHY RECRUIT YOUNG PEOPLE?



**Young people have an important role
to play in the future of adult social
care.**

Young people bring enthusiasm and a willingness to learn. Many have strong digital skills, adapt quickly to new ways of working and are keen to develop new knowledge and qualifications. By investing in young talent, providers can build a workforce that is resilient and equipped to meet the changing needs of people who draw on care and support.

With an ageing workforce and increasing demand for care and support, attracting the next generation of care workers is essential to ensuring the sector has the skilled and compassionate workforce it needs in the years ahead. In Cornwall, only 8% of the adult social care workforce is under the age of 25, while more than a quarter of the workforce is aged 55 or over.

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CREATING YOUTH-FRIENDLY JOB ADVERTISEMENTS



TOP TIPS FOR *YOUTH-FRIENDLY JOB ADVERTISEMENTS*



Write in plain English and avoid jargon



Focus on values and potential rather than previous experience



Clearly explain the impact of the role

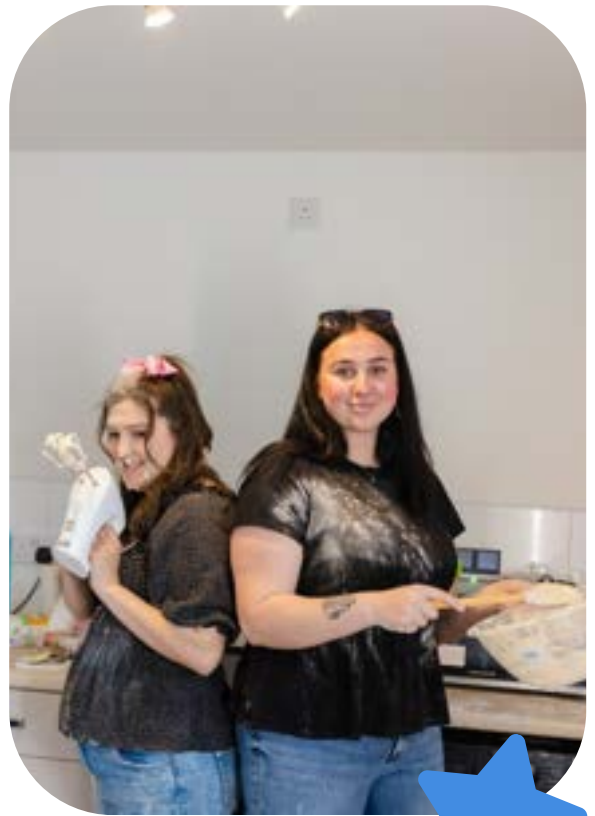


Highlight development and career progression opportunities



Keep adverts concise and mobile-friendly

Your job advertisement is often the first impression a young person has of your organisation and, for many, their first introduction to a career in adult social care. A well-written advert can help challenge common misconceptions about the sector and encourage people who may never have considered a career in care to apply.



Recruit for values and potential

Many young people have limited work experience, so it's important not to overlook applicants simply because they haven't worked in care before. Instead, focus on the values and personal qualities that make someone a great care worker, such as compassion, reliability, empathy and a willingness to learn.

Consider whether all of your essential criteria are genuinely essential. If previous care experience or specific qualifications can be gained through training, make this clear in the advert. Recruiting for potential rather than experience can help attract enthusiastic individuals who are keen to develop within the sector.



Proud to Care

Keep job advertisements simple!

How?

Make sure adverts are mobile friendly. Use clear headings, short paragraphs and avoid technical language. Describe the impact the job has.

I'll make sure to explain our organisation's values, the people we support and the difference our staff make every day.

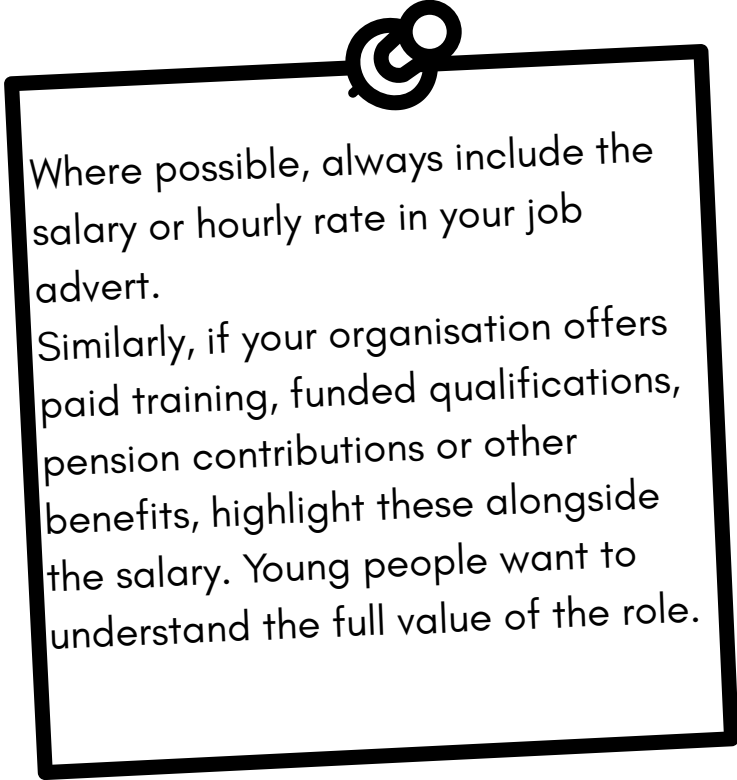


3

ADVERTISING PAY AND FLEXIBILITY TRANSPARENTLY

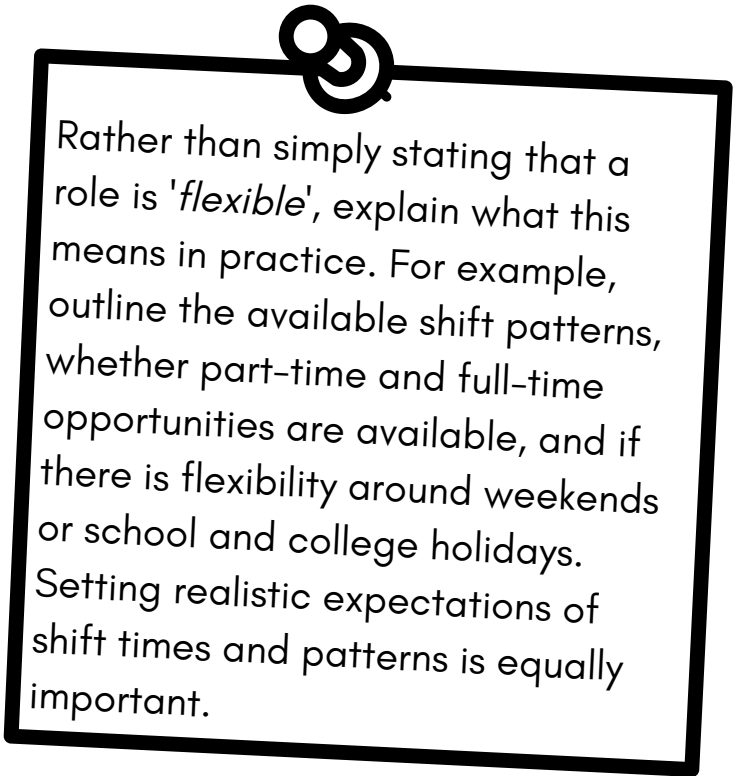


Research carried out with young people in Cornwall found that **pay and flexibility are two of the most important factors when considering a career. Being open about these details from the outset helps build trust and encourages more applications.**



Where possible, always include the salary or hourly rate in your job advert.

Similarly, if your organisation offers paid training, funded qualifications, pension contributions or other benefits, highlight these alongside the salary. Young people want to understand the full value of the role.



Rather than simply stating that a role is '*flexible*', explain what this means in practice. For example, outline the available shift patterns, whether part-time and full-time opportunities are available, and if there is flexibility around weekends or school and college holidays. Setting realistic expectations of shift times and patterns is equally important.

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DIGITAL RECRUITMENT BEST PRACTICE



For many young people, a smartphone is one of the first places they will look when searching for a job. This means your digital presence can have an influence on whether a young person discovers your vacancy and decides to apply.

For adult social care providers, this is an opportunity to reach young people in the spaces they already use. Rather than relying solely on traditional recruitment methods, think about how your vacancies appear online and whether a young person could easily find, understand and apply for your role from their phone.





Proud to Care · Follow



46 likes

Proud to Care A day in the life of a care worker ❤️

Being a care worker means making a difference every day. From helping with personal care and everyday tasks, to preparing meals, supporting independence and providing companionship, you'll be there to help people live the lives they want.

Every day is different, and it's a role where the little things can make a big difference. ❤️

Find out more about care careers in Cornwall at proudtocarecornwall.org.uk ... more

[View all 3 comments](#)



Add a comment...

6 days ago

Use social media to reach young people

Rather than simply posting "We're hiring - apply now", use your social media to tell a story. Introduce members of your team, share a day in the life of a care worker, celebrate achievements and qualifications, and show the difference your staff make to the people they support.

This can help young people understand adult social care as a career rather than simply another job vacancy.

Make sure your website and social media channels give a consistent picture of your organisation, your values and what it is like to work for you.

Make it easy to take the next step.

Every digital recruitment post should make it clear what the young person needs to do next. Include a direct link to the vacancy or application page rather than expecting someone to search for it themselves.

If someone has to click through several pages, create an account unnecessarily or search for the vacancy themselves, you risk losing their interest.

1

See the post

2

**Find out about
the role**

3

Apply

5

APPRENTICESHIP ROUTES





Apprenticeships can be an excellent way to bring young people into adult social care. They combine paid employment with structured learning, allowing someone to develop practical skills while working towards a recognised qualification.

For young people who may not want to follow a university route, an apprenticeship can provide a clear pathway into a rewarding career while earning a wage. For providers, apprenticeships can help develop new talent and build a skilled workforce from within your organisation.

Apprenticeship routes in Adult Social Care

Adult Care Worker – Level 2 is an entry-level route for people starting their career in adult social care. It provides the knowledge and practical skills needed to work effectively as a care worker.

Lead Adult Care Worker – Level 3 is suitable for experienced care workers who are ready to take on greater responsibility and develop their practice.

There are also progression opportunities at higher levels, including Lead Practitioner in Adult Care – Level 4 and Leader in Adult Care – Level 5, which can support progression into more senior and leadership roles. Other professional apprenticeships, including social work, nursing and occupational therapy, can also provide longer-term career pathways within health and social care.



How is an apprenticeship funded?



Apprenticeship funding is available to help employers meet the cost of training and assessment. The amount of funding available depends on the apprenticeship standard, the employer and the apprentice's circumstances.

Skills for Care states that apprenticeships for under-25s are fully funded for non-levy-paying employers, alongside additional incentive payments of up to £2,000 for employers recruiting new apprentices aged 16-24.

For employers who do not pay the apprenticeship levy, the government normally contributes towards training and assessment costs. Under the current 2026/27 arrangements, eligible apprentices aged under 25 can have their training fully funded. Other apprentices may require an employer contribution, depending on their circumstances.

Larger employers that pay the Apprenticeship Levy can use funds in their apprenticeship service account to pay for apprenticeship training. Levy-paying employers can also transfer up to 50% of their annual levy funds to another employer, which can provide an additional funding route for smaller care providers.



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RECRUITING UNDER-18S



Young people can start a career in adult social care before they turn 18. While there are additional considerations when employing 16 and 17-year-olds, it is possible for young people to work in the sector with the right support, training and supervision.

The requirements will vary depending on your service type, the role, the people you support and your insurance arrangements. It is important to consider your individual circumstances and seek appropriate advice before recruiting someone under 18.



Consider different routes into care

A young person's first experience of adult social care does not have to be in a traditional care worker role. Volunteering, work experience and ancillary roles can provide valuable opportunities to learn about the sector and develop workplace skills.



Read the Skills for Care guidance on employing under-18s



Consider the role

Think carefully about the responsibilities involved and whether the role is suitable for a young worker. Young people should receive appropriate training, supervision and support, with their competence and confidence considered before they take on tasks independently.

For example, an inexperienced worker should not be left in charge of a care setting or expected to work alone. There are also specific requirements around working hours and ensuring employment does not interfere with a young person's education or training.

Being under 18 does not have to be a barrier to starting a career in adult social care. With appropriate planning, supervision and support, young people can gain valuable experience and become an important part of your future workforce.

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SUPPORTING YOUNG WORKERS TO STAY AND GROW





Recruiting young people is only the first step. Creating an environment where young care workers feel supported, valued and able to develop is key to retaining them within your organisation and helping them build a long-term career in adult social care.

Young people may be new to the workplace and to the care sector, so having the right support around them can make a significant difference to their confidence and experience. A welcoming induction, regular check-ins and a supportive team can help young workers feel that they belong and have people they can turn to.



Invest in development

Show young workers the training, qualifications and opportunities available to help them progress.

Create a supportive workplace

Create a welcoming environment where young workers feel comfortable asking questions and seeking support.



**Supporting young
care workers**

Listen to young workers

Give young workers opportunities to share their ideas, experiences and feedback.

Show them a future in care

Highlight the different career pathways available so young workers can see a future in adult social care.

Recruiting a young person is an investment. By providing support, development and opportunities to progress, you can help them build confidence, develop their skills and grow into the future workforce of adult social care.

