

Connected Communities Report by Blystra Arts 2026.

A SNAPSHOT OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S PERSPECTIVES
OF NEWQUAY.

Executive Summary.

This report presents initial findings from the Connected Communities Survey, delivered by Blystra Arts CIC in 2025-26 in partnership with Falmouth University, to understand residents' relationship with Newquay, with a particular focus on young people aged 11-17. The purpose of the study was to explore whether residents like living in Newquay, what barriers they perceive to remaining there in the future, and whether the town and surrounding area offer sufficient career and life prospects to retain young people post-education. It can be used by funders, partners and local decision makers to shape strategy and improve funding bids for the area.

The survey gathered 348 responses via an online questionnaire using a mix of Likert Scale and open questions. Young people were intentionally oversampled, with 73% of respondents aged 11-17. Demographic characteristics broadly align with Office for National Statistics data for Newquay in most areas, providing confidence that the findings offer a reliable picture of resident experience, particularly among younger cohorts.

Overall, respondents express positive feelings about living in Newquay. Enjoyment of living in the town scored highest across all Likert measures, alongside moderate feelings of community connection and satisfaction with leisure opportunities. However, this positivity does not translate into confidence about the future. The weakest-performing indicator by a clear margin was the belief that Newquay offers a positive long-term career path. Confidence in the ability to secure independent housing locally was also low.

Analysis of responses from 11-17-year-olds reveals several critical relationships. Young people who believe they can access meaningful career opportunities locally are far more likely to want to remain in Newquay long-term, while those who see no career path are significantly more likely to intend to leave. Perceptions of safety also play an important role: young people who feel unsafe are nearly three times more likely to reject staying in Newquay, and negative sentiment about the town is notably higher among those who feel unsafe or uncertain about safety.

Open-text responses reinforce these patterns. Young respondents frequently cite a lack of job variety, low pay, seasonal work, and limited progression opportunities as key barriers to staying. Housing affordability, drugs and alcohol, antisocial behaviour, and a perceived absence of year-round youth spaces also feature strongly. Importantly, many young people express affection for Newquay and identify it as "home" but believe they must leave to succeed.

A notable finding is the apparent disconnect between enjoyment and intention: many young people who say they enjoy living in Newquay expect to leave. This suggests that departure is driven less by dissatisfaction with place than by concerns about economic security and future viability. Framed through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Newquay is seen as meeting social, emotional, and environmental needs, but failing to meet fundamental needs related to stable income and housing.

The conclusion is that young people's responses reflect hope rather than hostility and engagement rather than apathy. This makes them a critical group for future-focused policy. Key recommendations include attracting and supporting higher-skill, better-paid employers; improving pathways for graduates and returners; increasing awareness of existing career opportunities; providing appropriate workspace and housing for skilled workers; reframing Newquay's economic narrative beyond seasonality; and improving transport connectivity to widen access to careers across Cornwall.

Addressing these structural issues offers an opportunity to reduce out-migration, strengthen Newquay's economic resilience, and rebuild confidence among young people that the town can meet their long-term needs.

The findings of this survey align closely with the strategic direction outlined in the Newquay Youth Centre Strategic Business Plan (2025-2030), which identifies similar themes through youth consultation, including a lack of safe spaces, limited progression opportunities, and the need for stronger support networks for young people. The proposed redevelopment and expansion of Newquay Youth Centre into a seven-day youth and community hub directly responds to these concerns by providing open-access youth provision, wellbeing support, skills development, training pathways, and enterprise opportunities for young people aged 8-30. As such, the Youth Centre represents a practical, locally driven intervention that can contribute to addressing some of the issues highlighted by this survey, particularly around safety, youth engagement, and pathways into skills and employment.

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1. Methods / Background

Background to the Report

Prior to the commissioning of the Connected Communities report in 2025, a series of local initiatives and investigations helped to build a clearer understanding of community needs in Newquay.

In 2023 and 2024, Karl Fice-Thomson, then Community Lead at Trenance Learning Academy, facilitated a programme of community listening sessions. These sessions were designed to capture lived experiences of the town, with a particular emphasis on the perspectives of parents and families. They centred around four key questions:

1. What is the biggest pressure on your family right now?
2. What do you believe the role of the school is?
3. What does a successful future for your children look like?
4. If you could change anything in your community to better support your family, what would it be?

Insights from these sessions highlighted several priority areas for action. Notably, limited aspirations and a lack of accessible opportunities for young people emerged as a significant concern. This finding directly informed the development of *Empowering Newquay's Future*. This one-day event was conceived and led by Liz Wright, a Councillor in the town, working in collaboration with a range of local partners. The resulting town-wide event brought together 30 diverse businesses and engaged over 850 young people aged 5 to 18 from across Newquay. Both local secondary schools participated fully as project partners. In addition to the community listening work, the *Young People's Participation Framework* report, produced by Young People Cornwall in 2024, also informed this report. In particular, it provided valuable insight into perceptions of safety and young people's experiences of feeling safe within the Newquay community.

Community Conversations

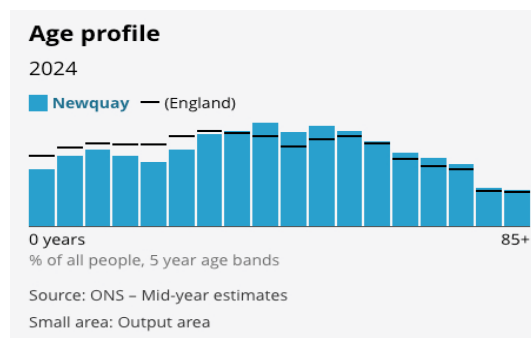
During the life of this commission from April 2025 to May 2026 Blystra Arts have had multiple and widespread community conversations at various events, the main one of which was the first ever *Empowering Newquay's Future* event, which Blystra co-managed alongside Newquay Orchard and which happened on the 16th May 2025. This event which allowed us to connect with the young people who were the key demographic we were focusing on in our report. ENF also allowed us to capture data specifically about careers. Also, during this commission we had conversations throughout 2025 at our community and schools carnival workshops, our community lantern making workshop and also when we attended Look Out Festival in Sept 2025. Alongside this we interviewed a number of young people from Treviglas Academy and young residents who lived in Newquay to get a fuller picture to supplement our quantitative findings and pulled out some case studies which can be found in the appendix of this report. These case studies allowed us to bring the data we've gathered alive, showcasing some of the young people and local community behind our findings. We also went into Newquay Youth Centre to capture the data of this more marginalised demographic of young people.

Purpose of study.

- To draw initial insights from the Connected Communities Survey administered by Blystra Arts in 2025 to inform the direction of more detailed analysis and to be used by funders, partners and local decision makers to shape strategy and improve funding bids for the area.
- To determine Newquay's residents' relationship with Newquay.
- To discover if residents like it here in Newquay, and what barriers, if any, they think might be preventing them from living here in the future.
- To determine if Newquay and its surrounding area have the career prospects to entice those leaving secondary education to stay in or close to Newquay.
- The data is drawn from a quantitative, online survey that was designed by Blystra Arts CIC in partnership with Falmouth University to determine barriers (if any) to people being able to live and thrive in Newquay.
- The survey included a range of closed (Likert Scale) and open questions.

Newquay, along with the rest of Cornwall is suffering from highly skilled people and graduates either leaving the area permanently or not returning to it once their educations are completed. This is particularly true for young people.

As this issue continues, attracting businesses to the area can become more difficult as there is a shortage of skilled and people they need for their businesses, limiting the choice further for young people looking for high paid, skilled employment. It also leaves the remaining young people under-represented and with a smaller voice, with older generations having a disproportionate say, potentially creating an even bigger problem as they naturally care less about the needs of young people, like the career potential of an area.



ONS data for age groups in Newquay.

Methods employed.

- A questionnaire (see appendix 1) was developed with a mixture of Likert Scale (Strongly Agree - Strongly Disagree) and open, optional questions. The questionnaire was filled in by students from Newquay's schools, Newquay Youth Centre and at events such as Lookout Festival, Carnival workshops and lantern making workshops.

- A large event was held at Newquay Orchard called ‘Empowering Newquay’s Future’ in May 2025 which was attended by students from both of Newquay’s secondary schools and one primary school. 30 local businesses had interactive stalls to engage students attending the event. Data was collected from attendees who form a similar sample in terms of being young people (aged 11-17) from Newquay, and for that reason the data can be explored for explanation (i.e. career aspirations). We were also able to talk to some young people at these events about how they perceived the town.

Number of respondents.

- 348 people responded to the survey.
- A large minority of free-text responses (e.g. the sexual orientation question) were not filled or ambiguous.

2. Findings

Key Findings.

- **Strong affection for place, weak confidence in the future.**
Most respondents, especially young people, say they enjoy living in Newquay and feel positively about its community and environment, but this enjoyment does not translate into confidence about staying long-term.
- **Perceived lack of career pathways is the strongest driver of young people leaving.**
Belief in access to meaningful, well-paid career opportunities is the single strongest predictor of whether 11-17-year-olds want to remain in Newquay. Those who do not see a career path are far more likely to plan to leave.
- **Safety perceptions significantly shape young people’s attachment to the town.**
Young people who feel unsafe in Newquay are nearly three times more likely to say they do not want to stay long-term, and negative sentiment about the town rises sharply where safety concerns exist. 20% of respondents answered ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘I feel safe in Newquay’.
- **Housing insecurity undermines long-term intentions.**
Low confidence in the ability to rent or buy a home locally is closely associated with intentions to leave, particularly among young people and working-age adults thinking ahead to independence.
- **Young people want to stay but believe they must leave to succeed.**
Many 11-17-year-olds describe Newquay as “home” and express emotional attachment, yet expect to move away due to low pay, seasonal work, limited progression, and concerns about economic stability. Their responses indicate hope and engagement rather than apathy or hostility.

The survey findings reinforce evidence gathered through recent youth consultation undertaken for the Newquay Youth Centre Strategic Business Plan. That consultation found that young people consistently requested more safe, welcoming indoor spaces, extended opening hours, creative activities, and opportunities to develop skills for adulthood. Young people described having “nowhere safe to go” in the evenings and winter months,

highlighting the importance of youth-focused community infrastructure. The proposed expansion of Newquay Youth Centre into a coordinated seven-day hub responds directly to these identified needs and represents a potential mechanism for strengthening young people's connection to the town.

Accessible youth spaces and trusted adult relationships are widely recognised as protective factors that improve young people's perceptions of safety and belonging. The Newquay Youth Centre Strategic Business Plan identifies the development of safe, youth-led spaces and consistent open-access provision as central to improving wellbeing and reducing isolation. By providing structured evening and weekend activities, trusted youth workers, and coordinated support from partner organisations, youth provision can play a preventative role in addressing the safety concerns identified in the survey.

2.1 Demographics of Respondents

Some responses are broadly in line with Office of National Statistics Census data for Newquay, others were not. The age profile is not typical of the area as young people were specifically targeted.

348 people responded to the survey.

- The majority (72.7%) of respondents (253/348) were aged between **11-17 years old**.
- The question on **gender** was an open question. It was possible to not answer it, although 327 (94%) did. The respondents described their gender as Woman (48.2% / 170 respondents) or Man (39% / 136 respondents), whilst 21 people did not respond, and 21 self-described as a gender fluid gender such as 'demigirl' or 'non-binary'. Some may have needed better guidance on answering the question. There were also resistive answers such as 'Jedi'. ONS statistics for Newquay show Female 51.5%, Male 48.5%.
- The majority (70.1%) of respondents described themselves as having '**no religion**' (244/348) followed by Christian (68/348, 19%) and Other (25/348, 7%). ONS data shows Newquay to have 50% no religion and 41% Christian. The younger demographic surveyed probably explains the difference with ONS 2021 Census data showing young people significantly less likely to follow an organised religion than older people. Combined, no religion and Christian make up about 90%, similar to ONS data.
- The majority (84.7%) of respondents do not classify themselves as a **carer** (295/348). ONS data for Newquay states 91.3% do not classify themselves as a carer.
- The majority (83%) of respondents do not consider themselves to have a **disability** (289/348). ONS data for Newquay states 81% do not have a disability.
- The majority (65.8%) of respondents live in Newquay (229/348).
- Under 'What is your postcode?' 191 people responded, about 55%. All of the postcodes were within an area consistent with the rural catchments of both of

Newquay's secondary schools. All respondents who stated they did not live in Newquay, where a postcode had also been entered, were within these catchments. This increases confidence that the overwhelming majority of all responses were from people who live either in Newquay or within 15 miles, regardless of whether they stated they lived in Newquay or not.

- The question on **ethnicity** was again an open question where it was possible not to respond - 15 stated 'Other', 'Asian' or 'Mixed' (4.3%), the rest were either 'White' or no response. The ONS data reports 3.6% for minority ethnic groups in Newquay.
- Sexual Orientation - 156 stated they were 'Straight' or similar ('Hetro', 'Normal'), while 88 had other descriptions ('Exploring', 'Queer', 'Fluid', 'Asexual') or a resistive or playful answer, 32 stated they were 'Gay/Lesbian', 'Pansexual' or 'Bisexual'. The rest gave no response. Some in the predominant age group surveyed may not have taken this question too seriously. Some may be still questioning their sexuality or would rather not subscribe to a convention of labelling themselves, or others.



Newquay as defined by The Office for National Statistics

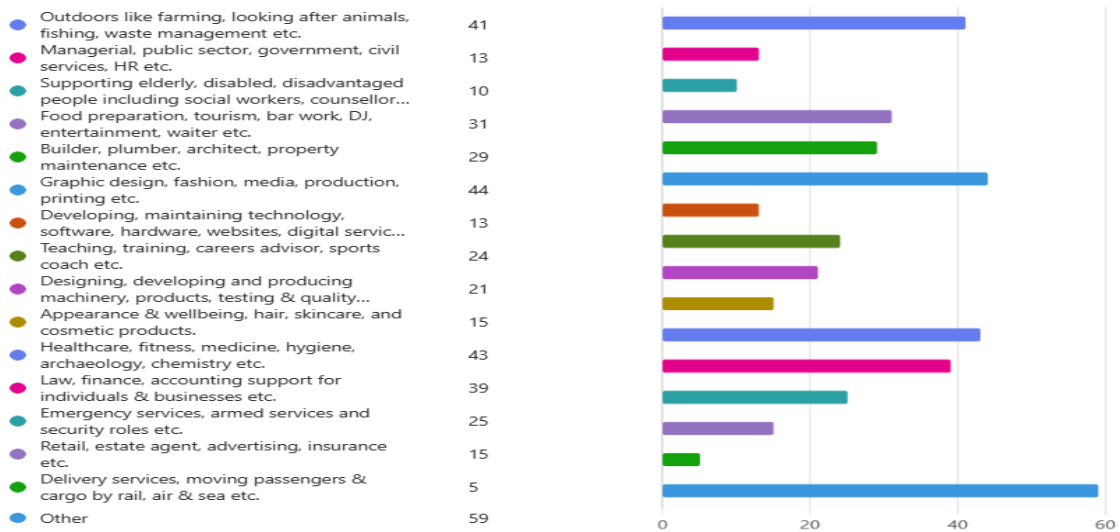
From reviewing this data, it can be determined that the 'typical' respondent was an 11-17-year-old female resident of Newquay, one of no religion, no disability, and does not consider themselves to be a care giver.

2.1.1 Young People (11-17 Year Olds)

The survey was conducted amongst all age groups and the comparisons and contrasts between the age groups are interesting, but with such a large sample size of 11-17-year-olds we should not ignore the opportunity we have to examine that group's opinions and intentions. This report, therefore, explores some areas of interest with regards to 11-17-year-olds.

There is another dataset from young people surveyed at the **Empowering Newquay's Future** (ENF) event in May 2025. Many of those respondents are the same people who responded to the survey this report examines. Not surprisingly the demographics map over well. The table below lists types of careers respondents were expecting to enter in to when completing the ENF survey.

3. Which type of future do you see yourself having?



Likert Scale Responses.

Below is a table with all the Likert scale responses:

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Mean (1=Strongly agree) | Std. Deviation |
|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| I want to live in Newquay long-term. | 78 | 65 | 115 | 57 | 33 | 2.71 | 1.24 |
| I enjoy living in Newquay | 102 | 129 | 90 | 10 | 17 | 2.16 (highest) | 1.03 |
| Newquay has a good community which I feel connected to. | 54 | 124 | 119 | 38 | 13 | 2.51 | 1.00 |
| I can see a positive career path for me in Newquay or its surrounding area. | 25 | 73 | 157 | 69 | 24 | 2.98 (lowest) | 0.98 |
| I think I'll be able to find my own home in Newquay (either buying or renting a home). | 48 | 81 | 129 | 58 | 32 | 2.84 | 1.13 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|----|-----|-----|----|----|------|------|
| I feel safe in Newquay (this question relates to crime, anti-social behaviour, discrimination, drugs & alcohol). | 47 | 124 | 108 | 51 | 18 | 2.62 | 1.05 |
| I think Newquay and the surrounding area has enough sports, leisure and entertainment opportunities to live here happily. | 43 | 170 | 98 | 29 | 8 | 2.39 | 0.88 |

Overall, the Likert Scale responses about Newquay were positive with the majority answering either positive or neutral responses to questions about their relationship to the town. 'I can see a positive career path for me in Newquay or its surrounding area' performed the weakest and 'I enjoy living in Newquay' performed the strongest.

We asked open questions about what the respondents thought the challenges or barriers to living in Newquay were.

To **'What do you think might prevent you from working in Newquay in the future?'** The responses were largely focussed on a lack of opportunity - 'No military bases nearby', 'Only busy in summer', 'not many job opportunities related to what I want to do', 'not much variety', 'job availability', 'expensive and low pay' were typical answers.

This is also comparable to the **ENF** data. For example, the ENF data showed that those who did not see themselves achieving their preferred career in Newquay was because 'there's not much about in Newquay and it's a bit of a boring place' 'not many opportunities' 'Not enough high-paying opportunities' 'Newquay has nothing to do except tourism related', and 'Not sufficient RAF provisions' and 'no army'.

There were also responses which indicated an ambition or aspiration to move away, answers such as 'I like cities', 'I don't want to stay in Cornwall', 'Opportunity to learn or work somewhere else', 'I want to travel', 'I want variety, I doubt I'll find it somewhere I've lived almost my entire life' were common.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---|----|----|
| Strongly Disagree / Disagree | 4 | 21 | 46 |
|------------------------------|---|----|----|

- The strongest relationship in the survey.
- 11-17-year-olds who see a positive career path are far more likely to want to stay long-term.
- 11-17-year-olds who don't see a career path are much more likely to reject staying.
- The largest group is neutral, indicating that this group is undecided and that this group of respondents could be influenced by intervention or improvements in opportunities.

Pivot Table 2 - 11-17-year-olds only.

'I feel safe in Newquay' vs 'I want to live in Newquay long-term'.

| I feel safe | Strongly Agree / Agree Stay | Neutral Stay | Strongly Disagree / Disagree Stay |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| Strongly Agree / Agree | 30 | 48 | 24 |
| Neutral | 26 | 40 | 28 |
| Strongly Disagree / Disagree | 11 | 19 | 28 |

- Very strong relationship.
- 11-17-year-olds who feel safe in Newquay are nearly three times more likely to want to stay in Newquay than those who don't feel safe (30 vs 11).
- Nearly half of 11-17-year-olds who do not feel safe responded that they did not want to stay in Newquay (28 of 58).
- The largest group is neutral indicating this group is undecided and that there is an opportunity to retain them in the town.

Pivot Table 3 - 11-17-year-olds only.

'I feel safe in Newquay' vs 'Any further comments on how you feel about Newquay' (104 responses)

| I feel safe | Positive Comment | Neutral or mixed comment | Negative comment |
|-------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
|-------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|

| | | | |
|------------------------------|----|----|----|
| Strongly Agree / Agree | 13 | 8 | 17 |
| Neutral | 6 | 9 | 24 |
| Strongly Disagree / Disagree | 4 | 12 | 11 |

- A strong relationship.
- 62% of young people who feel neutral about safety express negative sentiment
- 41% of those who do not feel safe express negative sentiment
- Even among those who feel safe, negative sentiment remains substantial (45%)
- Positive sentiment is highest where safety is strongest
- Positive sentiment is more than twice as high among those who feel safe (34%) than among those who feel neutral or unsafe (15%).

Pivot Table 4 - 11-17-year-olds only.

‘I want to live in Newquay long-term’ vs ‘I enjoy living in Newquay’.

| Enjoy Newquay | Strongly Agree / Agree Stay | Neutral Stay | Strongly Disagree / Disagree Stay |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| Strongly Agree / Agree | 56 | 70 | 23 |
| Neutral | 6 | 35 | 39 |
| Strongly Disagree / Disagree | 2 | 2 | 20 |

- Strong relationship.
- Of the 149 11-17-year-olds who agreed they enjoyed living in Newquay, only 56 (38%) agreed that they want to live there long-term and those who were neutral about enjoying living in Newquay are very likely to want to leave.
- People who enjoy living somewhere usually want to stay.

Pivot Table 5

‘I think I’ll be able to find my own home in Newquay (either buying or renting a home)’ vs ‘I want to live in Newquay long-term’. All age groups.

| I'll get housing | Strongly Agree / Agree Stay | Neutral Stay | Strongly Disagree / Disagree Stay |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| Strongly Agree / Agree | 80 | 42 | 7 |
| Neutral | 39 | 55 | 35 |
| Strongly Disagree / Disagree | 24 | 18 | 48 |

- Moderate-to-strong relationship
- Those who believe they will be able to buy or rent locally are more likely to want to stay long-term
- Those who lack housing confidence often express neutral or negative future intentions. This is particularly visible for working-age adults and young people who are thinking ahead.

Final remarks on findings.

- The dataset is large enough, with a reliable comparison to ONS data in most demographics to draw reliable directional insights.
- There were seven Likert Scale questions, punctuated by some open, optional questions. Response distributions remained varied across Likert questions, with no strong evidence of end-of-survey response compression, suggesting minimal Likert fatigue.
- The levels of engagement are very good. A survey of this kind, with this demographic would not normally be expected to garner as many responses to open, optional questions as this survey did.
- The overwhelming majority of respondents identify as **living in Newquay**, indicating that the survey largely reflects the experiences and views of residents rather than visitors or short-term users of the town. This provides a strong basis for understanding lived experience.

Future surveys could use clearer, more structured options (with “prefer not to say” included on the open text questions) which may reduce the amount of resistive or playful answers, although those answers do arguably contain some insights.

3 Conclusions and Recommendations.

Conclusions.

From the data collected in the survey, we can make some assertions and recommend actions for the future which may mitigate some of the drivers for people wanting, or being forced by circumstance, to leave Newquay.

Many people leave Newquay to improve their education or training, to learn, but the amount of them who return after completing their learning can be improved.

The survey conducted tells us that young people mostly like Newquay as a place to live but lack any confidence that the town, or the surrounding area will be able to meet their future needs, particularly in respect to careers and housing.

Young people feel:

- Affection for the environment and town.
- That Newquay is “home”.
- There are very few jobs or careers for them.
- They will have to leave to succeed.
- Work is low-paid or seasonal.
- Drugs and alcohol issues are a concern in the town.
- Antisocial behaviour issues are a concern in the town.
- That they are unsafe in certain areas, especially at night or in the town centre.
- There are limited youth spaces.
- There is seasonal provision that disappears in winter.

Compared to older age groups:

11-17-year-olds are:

- More negative
- More anxious about the future
- More focused on opportunity and safety

Adults are:

- More mixed in their views about Newquay.
- More reflective about change in Newquay.
- More focused on change, decline, or community.

Young people are talking about prospects, not nostalgia.

11-17-year-olds care about Newquay, but don't trust it to care for them in return.

Their responses suggest:

- Hope, not hostility.
- Engagement, not apathy.
- A desire to stay if conditions change.

This makes them a critical group for future-focused policy.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.



We can use Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as a tool to interpret the findings around enjoyment vs perceived careers and housing prospects. The survey reflects that young people feel that Newquay can deliver self-actualisation, self-esteem, belonging and (by-and-large) safety, but is, in their opinion, unable to deliver basic needs such as a regular well-paid income and adequate housing. This is likely to explain the disparity between enjoying living in Newquay and the desire to leave.

The findings also highlight the importance of community infrastructure that supports young people's wellbeing, development, and connection to place. Investment in facilities such as Newquay Youth Centre can help address several of the issues raised by respondents, including safety, limited youth spaces, and a lack of progression opportunities. The planned development of the Centre into a youth-led community hub will provide a combination of open-access youth work, skills and employability programmes, wellbeing support, creative opportunities, and a social enterprise café offering training and work experience. This type of provision strengthens social capital, supports personal development, and can play an important role in helping young people see a viable future for themselves in Newquay.

Recommendations.

Introduction

Based on the findings of this report, we're suggesting two levels of recommendation. The first is an immediate and localised list of recommendations which will endeavour to respond immediately to the needs of the community, particularly young people, and the second are a series of recommendations that endeavour to deal with some of the wider overarching findings of the report. Our immediate and localised recommendations offer an immediate and more localised response to this report.

Immediate (Short term) Recommendations.

What we can do now.

Raising Aspirations and showcasing Newquay

We think delivering projects or events that raise the aspirations of the people living in Newquay, is one way of showcasing the town as a dynamic place for businesses to settle, at the same time as bolstering the feelings of connection young people and all residents have to the town, which in turn will create a greater sense of safety and civic pride in the young people who live here and perhaps encourage more young people to stay in the town in the future.

One of the key businesses to be cited again, and again as being inspirational at our Empowering Newquay's Future event was Spaceport Cornwall, which is a big, exciting national company, who reside just outside Newquay. Events such as Empowering Newquay's Future, which showcases all the national companies, creative businesses and freelancers who are making their living here in Newquay, bolster civic pride, showcased the breadth of what's on offer here for local people and was also inspiring for locals.

Our immediate recommendation is for the Empowering Newquay's Future event to secure funding to become an annual event in the Newquay calendar. The outcomes of this event, (see attached appendix), seemed to raise aspirations of our young population in the town, as well as showcasing what we have to offer as a town for dynamic national and independent businesses from outside Cornwall who might be looking to settle their businesses here.

Newquay is a place that offers a good work/life balance and we found that the national companies, freelancers and small businesses who have settled here, valued a good work/life balance in their business models and that is why they have chosen Newquay as the town to settle in. Empowering Newquay's Future could sit at the heart of the Newquay's careers calendar and work on multiple levels to inspire our young people while also driving investment and businesses settlement to the town in the future. So, an immediate recommendation would be to source funding to ensure that Empowering Newquay's Future and similar aspirational events become part of the annual Newquay calendar.

Increase awareness of career opportunities

Raising awareness of career opportunities in Newquay through events such as Empowering Newquay's Future, which showcase the wide range of career options already in the town are key to keeping our skilled young people here, including showcasing national companies based in Newquay and highlighting alternative career paths such as freelance & self-employed options. There are already many national companies who have businesses here, but there is a lack of awareness of them in the young population. In the short term the partners of ENF and decision makers in the town, should look to raise awareness of what opportunities are already happening in Newquay.

This could be done through a series of talks and careers workshops in schools from businesses who call Newquay their home. Creating connection points between the business world and young people is one way to ensure young people are aware of career options here, while also inspiring young people to stay and seek work in the town, rather than going further afield to seek employment. Social media could play a large role in connecting people with career opportunities, something which already happening in other towns.

Awareness of safety schemes in Newquay

This report and the ENF event have shown that even when initiatives to combat issues in the town are already happening, many young people are unaware of them. An example of this is Newquay BID's Safe Spaces Strategy, which was launched in 2025. 19.8% of young people in our report stated that they did not feel safe in Newquay, and we believe that many young people from 11 to 25 do not know about the Safe Spaces initiative. An immediate way to rectify this situation is to ensure initiatives created by the town council and Newquay BID and other centralised organisations in the town, are communicated effectively to the schools and other youth organisations in the town, to ensure young people know what support is available to them if they are out for the night in the town and in need of support or a place to find refuge.

Strategic Conversations about the Youth of the Town

This report can have an influence in current, strategic conversations happening around youth provision in the town by Newquay Youth Centre, Newquay Convening Partnership and Watergate Integrated Neighbourhood Team Group VCSE. We hope this report will give a voice to young people in these conversations happening over the next few years, as it gives a good view of what young people think and gives us an indication, as a town, of what we can do to keep our young people from leaving and how we can make the town into a place they feel they can return to and have positive careers and lives here in the future.

In 2025, a feasibility study was commissioned by Newquay Town Council which explored how Newquay Town Council would manage the Youth Centre when it is devolved to them. The town council have plans to have seven day a week provision and activity happening at the youth centre, and this report can be used to shape the vision the town council has for this provision, ensuring the young people have a voice in how this activity and offer looks, and how it can best serve their needs. This report will also form part of the evidence base for the work that Newquay Convening Partnership are doing in the area of community provision and townwide development. Lastly, there is a new group that's recently been formed called Watergate Integrated Neighbourhood Team Group who are looking at the NHS, schools and youth focussed groups, and exploring Youth wellbeing "Well Centre" model (London).

Longer Term Recommendations.

Newquay Youth Centre

Newquay has the only remaining dedicated youth centre building in Cornwall, and a strong community of partners delivering services to young people. During the life of this commission, it has become clear that the youth centre will come under the ownership of Newquay Town Council, devolved from Cornwall Council. Existing funding, primarily aimed at assisting young people with additional needs, those disengaged with education or who have been in trouble with the police can be spent, potentially to trial initiatives to improve their lives and the town in terms of safety and how the town is perceived by residents and potential businesses looking to expand or relocate to the area.

Newquay Town Council is in the process of taking control of the lease on the Newquay Youth Centre building and once this happens, they will be in a position to design services specifically for the town and its young residents, and for services to be delivered from there to assist young people embarking on careers. The town council's intention is to:

- Open the service more regularly to increase inclusivity.
- Use partners in the NHS, commissioned drug & alcohol services, housing & homelessness advocates, education, training & careers advice, Youth Offending Service, leaving care services, the police etc. to deliver drop-in sessions.
- Set up a business mentoring programme with local business involvement, preferably co-produced with young people and business leaders in the area.
- Create a register of local skills amongst young people in Newquay to be visible and published for businesses to have access to, to promote what Newquay has to offer businesses considering locating to the area.

Look towards attracting more businesses to the town.

The data shows that young people want to be fulfilled with a career that means something to them and pays them enough to afford housing in the area. By widening the choice and increasing opportunities, the town can provide good career prospects for more people.

Lay the foundations and continue to work strategically to encourage skilled businesses to set up in Newquay.

Businesses which require highly skilled, well-paid employees require staff who can fulfil the business' requirements and will not move to an area if they perceive there is a skills shortage there. We need to make Newquay more attractive to businesses:

- A visible pool of skilled workers
- Clear pathways for graduates to return
- Links with nearby universities, FE colleges
- Returner schemes for people who grew up locally

Provide the right kind of infrastructure.

Businesses require stability, certainty, the right accommodation, the right local workforce, housing for their workforce.

Reframe the perception of Newquay

Newquay is currently seen as a tourism-led, seasonal town. This perception doesn't have to change, but we can add a second identity as a coastal, skilled, future-focussed, business-orientated place which places an emphasis on providing a stable and certain climate for potential businesses to flourish in the short, medium and long term.

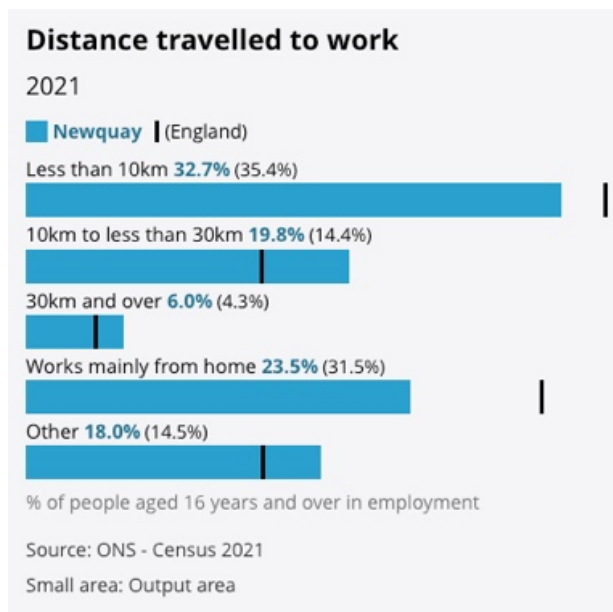
By engaging with The Growth Hub and other strategic organisations and initiatives and developing Newquay's own strategy for attracting businesses to the town, Newquay could, in the medium to long-term begin to widen its appeal to young people looking to build a successful career.

Increase awareness of existing career opportunities.

Young people of school leaving age have an incomplete knowledge of the different careers open to them in Newquay and its surrounding area. This was made evident at the Empowering Newquay's Future event in May 2025 while having conversations with them. Some said they had been given a comprehensive idea of the careers landscape, while others, with ambitious career plans, told us they had only been made aware of entry-level jobs such as retail or hospitality work by the schools and Careers Service.

Most young people do not have a concrete career plan aged 14 or 15, and Saturday and holiday jobs are very much on their minds so it may well be the case that services recognise this and tailor their advice to the present moment. An overview of the sorts of careers which are available to post-graduates and skilled workers may prove to be beneficial in the longer term as young people are forming their future ambitions.

With a longer than average journey to work compared with the rest of England, it seems that people in Newquay are willing to travel to fulfil their work commitments. It also suggests that varied careers are available in Cornwall, but that people travel to get to work.



Making transport of all kinds accessible and affordable for young people opens the Cornish careers market to residents of Newquay. The new Mid Cornwall Metro opens in 2026 which will help. Cornwall’s bus services compare well to other rural areas in England. Cornwall’s model is often cited as a successful example of turning around rural transport. However, bus services are not currently stable or guaranteed with a major bus provider withdrawing its fleet in February 2026 and another provider likely to be taking over. Uncertainty with travel is likely prevent people making plans or careers decisions which rely on them.

Schemes which assist people to pass their driving tests, which are accessible through the local authority for carers, those with disabilities and care leavers, and schemes via Jobcentre Plus for those seeking work where travel is essential should be utilised as much as possible and some of the cohort completing the questionnaire may be entitled to apply. For those who do not qualify and would rather not find themselves engaging with services for the long-term unemployed (because they don’t want to be in that situation to start with), there is no provision. Information, advice and guidance on becoming a driver in an area where opportunities increase for an individual when they can drive should be available via youth services and colleges. It may be desirable to start a support group or club, perhaps in partnership with a reputable driving school.

Invest in Youth Infrastructure

Alongside economic development initiatives, investment in youth infrastructure should be prioritised. Facilities such as Newquay Youth Centre provide safe spaces, trusted relationships with youth workers, and access to skills, training, and leadership opportunities that help young people develop confidence and resilience. The planned redevelopment of the Youth Centre into a seven-day youth-led hub offers an opportunity to strengthen young people’s connection to the town, support progression pathways, and contribute to the long-term social and economic resilience of Newquay.

The Connected Communities research and the Newquay Youth Centre Strategic Business Plan together provide complementary evidence highlighting both the challenges and the opportunities facing young people in Newquay. While the survey identifies concerns around careers, safety, and housing, the Youth Centre plan outlines practical local interventions that can strengthen community connection, wellbeing, and skills development.

Thanks and Credits

This report was commissioned and funded by Safer Stronger Communities in April 2025 and delivered by Blystra Arts CIC in May 2026.

During this commission Blystra Arts worked alongside Natalie Semley, senior lecturer at Falmouth University who supported with data collection and analysis. Special thanks to both Treviglas Academy and Newquay Tretherras for supporting us to chat to students and collecting surveys from their students which allowed this report to be so focused on young people in the town.

Throughout 2025 Blystra Arts collected data and had conversations at four community events during the year. These events were: Empowering Newquay's Future, the Newquay Carnival workshops, Look Out Festival and the Community Lantern Making workshop. Thanks to each of these partners for allowing us to collect data at these events. A film which presents the findings of the report in a more accessible way can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/@blystraarts2472>



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Appendix 1

Connected Communities Survey:

Connected Communities - Survey.

Connected Communities is a data collection project funded by Safer Stronger Communities and designed to get a snapshot of the thoughts, feelings and obstacles to people living in Newquay in 2025. This survey will allow us to collect data on Newquay, its residents and their relationship to Newquay. We'd like to hear whether you like living in or near Newquay and what obstacles, if any, you might have to

living and working in Newquay in the future. All data collected is private and confidential and not linked to an individual. When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

1.I want to live in Newquay long-term.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree

2.I enjoy living in Newquay

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree

3.Newquay has a good community which I feel connected to.

Strongly agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree

4.I can see a positive career path for me in Newquay or its surrounding area.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree

5.What do you think might prevent you from working in Newquay in the future?

6.I think I'll be able to find my own home in Newquay (either buying or renting a home).

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree

7. I feel safe in Newquay (this question relates to crime, anti-social behaviour, discrimination, drugs & alcohol).

Strongly Agree

Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree

8.If you don't feel safe in Newquay, can you give further details?

9.Is there a specific place in Newquay where you feel safe?

10.I think Newquay and the surrounding area has enough sports, leisure and entertainment opportunities to live here happily.

Strongly agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree

11.If you think Newquay needs more sports, leisure or entertainment, please say what you'd like.

12.Any further comments on how you feel about Newquay.

13.What is your age?

11-17
18-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65+

14.How do you describe your religion?

No Religion
Buddhist
Christian
Hindu
Jewish
Muslim
Sikh
Other

15.How do you describe your gender?

16.How do you describe your ethnic background?

17.How do you describe your sexual orientation?

18.Are you a carer for someone?

Yes

No

19. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes

No

20. Do you live in Newquay?

Yes

No

21. What is your postcode?

22. If you would you like to take part in the project further, either by participating in a more in-depth interview or taking part in a short film we're doing, please write your name & phone number below so that we can contact you.

[Submit](#)

Appendix 2 – Project Case Studies



Case Studies Introduction



Throughout 2025 and 2026 we had some conversations with young people to gain further insight in to our survey questions and to get opinions on some of the questions. We talked to students at Treviglas in 2026 to gain further insight into what they thought of Newquay and why they thought young people might be leaving the town. Here are three case studies created from those conversations with Year 11 students in early 2026.



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Case Study 1

Year 11 Student from Treviglas Academy



Introduction

Case Study 1 is from Newquay and is going to prestigious college for post 16 education. He passed the entrance exam alongside 200 other people, and he got one of twelve spaces available.

High paid jobs are hard to find here

Newquay's quite a hospitality orientated area. People don't understand that there are more jobs in Newquay. Newquay is good at hiding the high paying jobs, unless you want to own a business.

Housing

House prices are really high in Newquay so people don't want to stay. My house with my parents is small but it was expensive. Its quite difficult to find a home if you're just starting out.

Jobs are changing

Its becoming more possible with technology and remote working, for people to work for companies from other places, such as London.

The Job Market in Newquay

When you go to careers fairs put on by schools, the only companies who are there are hospitality sector companies, and there is not many people/companies to talk to from higher paid more prestigious job roles, but I think young people are looking further ahead in their lives than just the next few years. Young people are more aware of their futures and how competitive the job market is now.

Conclusion

Case Study 1 had views that aligned with the views showing up on our survey. He was a clever, top grade student leaving Cornwall to seek success elsewhere. He thought house prices were too expensive here and that this made it hard for young people to find homes in Newquay. He also thought that high paying jobs were hard to find in Newquay. He believed that young people were more conscious of their careers, and were looking further ahead in their lives, and that careers' fairs at school only offered young people immediate school leaver roles in areas such as the hospitality sector. He did say that tech and remonte working options were opening up higher paid opportunities for people here in more recent years. Events such as Empowering Newquay's Future could combat some of the issues he raised here in the future by showcasing an alternative more accurate view of businesses thriving in Newquay. The ENF data confirmed that events such as ENF could really turn the tide on young people staying in Newquay.

KEY POINTS

Case Study 1 thinks:

- Young people are looking further ahead in terms of careers. We need wider options at careers fairs.
- High paying jobs are not easy to find in Newquay.
- Tech and remote working is transforming job options in Newquay.
- Housing is too expensive in Newquay, it's hard for young people to get homes.

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Case Study 2

Year 11 Student from Treviglas Academy

Introduction

Student 2 is going to Truro College to study. He will have to get a lift from where he lives in on the north coast as there is no direct bus service to college.


Newquay as a tourist town driving other businesses away

Because it's so busy in the height of the season, some businesses might not want to settle in Newquay, as the town is so busy in the summer months. The business in the summer is great for hospitality businesses, but may drive away other business who otherwise would settle here.

KEY POINTS

Case Study 2 thinks:

- The business of the town in the height of the season may put off other businesses settling here.
- Perceptions around Newquay being shabby and not appearing or looking nice, may affect young people wanting to stay here.
- Second homes are a factor in us needing to build more homes, as so many places are left empty for most of the year.

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Perceptions of Newquay

I think the majority of people, a large majority would rather say I work in London, rather than work in Newquay, which is run down. The buildings aren't the nicest, and places like London are more prestigious than places like Newquay.

Second homes

I feel like rich people work in London and come home to Cornwall and Newquay for the summer. Some of the houses they own aren't even lived in all year round. It's another factor when looking at housing issues and the amount of development happening in Newquay and Cornwall.

Conclusion

Case Study 2 thought that the appearance of Newquay might affect young people wanting to stay here as they might think that saying they work in London sounded better and meant they were doing better and being more successful. He thought this was a factor in people not wanting to stay in the town. He also thought that the fact that Newquay was such a tourist town might put other non hospitality businesses off settling here, because the town was so busy in the summer months, it was actually quite hard to function here at that time of year. He thought that the second homes were contributing to all the housing that needed to be built in the town, as there wasn't enough houses to go around, and there were many houses standing empty most of the year round which were only used in the summer. This was also driving house prices up and making it less affordable for people to buy houses here.



Case Study 3

Year 11 Student from Treviglas Academy

Introduction

Case Study 3 is going to Truro College to study A-Levels and wants to go to Exeter University to study History once she completes post 16 education.

Nice community doesn't make up for lack of options

Case Study 3 likes living in Newquay but said it can be quite samey and that she wanted to live somewhere else that was different. She felt that Newquay had a nice community that she felt connected to, but that the nice community doesn't make up for the lack of options in terms of leisure and entertainment and work here.

KEY POINTS

Case Study 3 thinks:

- The town is a great place to live with a great community, but that there are a lack of career and leisure options here.
- Not a diverse range of options here. If you're interested in history and humanities there aren't that many options for you here.
- Newquay has a strong identity, despite the influx of people coming in each summer, we still manage to keep our unique identity as a town

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Lots of career options here are to do with science rather than humanities

I'm not sure about a career here. There's nothing around that I want to do. Lots of the industries are based on tourism and the exciting stuff happening here was related to science, such as possible jobs around the Spaceport. I want to do history stuff and I feel like there's not much to do in this area related to humanities. There is the potential to remote work, but I'm not sure how many jobs you can go in to in that field that are remote working.

Newquay has a strong identity as a place

Even though Newquay has a big influx of tourists each summer coming here, the town still manages to keep it's unique identity.

Conclusion

Case Study 3 loved living in Newquay but wanted to leave as she thought it was very samey here and she wanted to experience somewhere else at least for a little bit. She thought Newquay had a very strong and unique identity and that even with the tourists coming in each summer this remained strong. She thought that there could be a more varied selection of leisure options available. She cited the cinema, swimming pool and aquarium as the only ones. She was interested in history and humanities and noted that it was not easy to find a job in these sectors in Newquay or Cornwall and that although there was exciting stuff happening here in the area of science that opportunities in the field of humanities were limited.

Appendix 3 – Empowering Newquay’s Future Data Overview – 25/6/25

Evaluating Empowering Newquay’s Future 2025

(Last updated: 25.06.25)

Two surveys were circulated after the delivery of the Empowering Newquay’s Future event. These were designed to:

- A. Evaluate the experience of **businesses** who investing their time in the event – data from which can help ENF to improve future events.
- B. Evaluate **student** perceptions of the event and gauge their future aspirations and help shape future interventions to support and guide them towards their aspirations, hopefully here in Newquay.

Data from both has been reviewed and is described below. Additional data analysis and insight can follow, once the sample is confirmed as being complete.

A. Business Feedback

21/30 businesses responded to the survey.

1. Pre-event insights

- 54% heard about the event via an email invitation.
- The main motivation for attending was ‘to inspire future talent’ (67%) followed by ‘to connect with other organisations’ (10%).
- The event organisation was rated as excellent (76%) and good (24%).
- Communication about the event was clear and timely (90%).
- Businesses were very satisfied with the venue / location (86%) the rest were satisfied (14%).

2. Event delivery insights

- 90% of businesses said the set up and support on the day was adequate.
- The quality of student interactions was perceived as being excellent (57%), good (38%), and fair (5%).
- 60% of businesses confirmed that they met students who would be a good fit for their organisation in the future. 40% suggestion ‘possibly’.
- Every business had meaningful engagements on the day, with 40% having over 30 meaningful engagements!
- 55% of businesses perceived a gap in knowledge, skills, or preparation during their conversations.
- 85% of businesses said that the event met their expectations, 15% said it ‘somewhat’ did.

3. Best parts

- *'The enthusiasm of the young people'*
- *'The community atmosphere'*
- *'The range of businesses'*
- *'Great venue, well managed'*
- *'Nice to allow each organisation to engage with young people in their own ways'*

4. Areas for improvement

- *'The parking was scarce'*
- *'securing more young people aged 16, 17, 18 and above'*
- *'More schools'*
- *'allow more time to engage with the students'*
- *'It'd be good for the students to all be prepared; those with question sheets were more engaged'*
- *'Invite more schools/providers'*
- *'have all stands together'*
- *'A dedicated `quite` time'*

5. Post-event reflections

- 90% of businesses would be interested in future events, the remaining 10% might.
- Only 10% would not be interested in collaborating with other local employers on joint outreach or training programmes for young people.
- 50% of businesses offer internships, work experience, or graduate roles that could be promoted to students in Newquay.
- 60% of business would 'possibly, in the future' like to discuss future engagement with the ENF team (30% yes, 10% no).

6. Final reflections

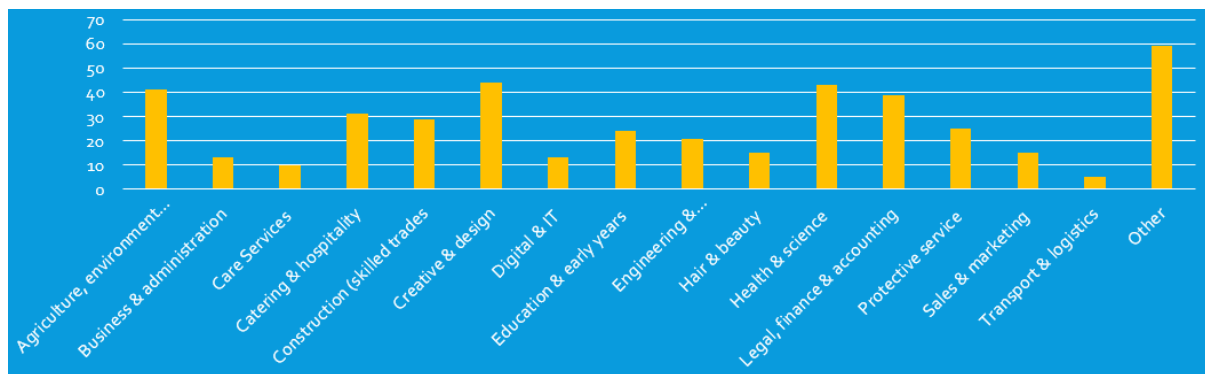
- *'I visit so many settings across the county and this was by far the best on an exhibitor level... Those that did engage did so with manners, respect and enthusiasm'*
- *'We loved being a part of it. Thanks for having us.'*
- *'A great event and lots of time and effort was put into the day, volunteers helping were amazing! Thank you!'*

B. Student Feedback

222/800+ students responded to the survey – all students who engaged with the survey were from Newquay Trevilglas.

1. The students

- Only responses from Newquay Trevilglas were obtained, these were drawn from Year 9 (55%) and Year 10 (45%).
- 10% see themselves having a future in the ‘creative and design’ sector, the ‘Agriculture, environment and animal care’ sector, and the ‘Health & science’ sector.
- 14% stated ‘other’ which requires additional analysis but includes futures that fit into existing categories (i.e., ‘sports’ = Education and early years), others are not as easily pigeon-holed (i.e., marine biology) or the students did not know (i.e., idk).



2. Their future in Newquay

24% believed they **can** have the future their aspire towards in Newquay (53% possibly and 23% do not).

- **Yes:** *‘nice place to live and seems to be alot of jobs in my area’*
- **Yes:** *‘because i can achive it’*
- **Yes:** *‘there are lots of carrer options in Newquay’*
- **Possibly:** *‘Not sure on what there is in newquay which do what i want’*
- **Possibly:** *‘I want to be able to learn new things and I think its more likely that I learn more things in new places outside Newquay’*
- **No:** *‘newquay has nothing to do except tourism related’*
- **No:** *‘Newquay its a good place to start from but not where to grow (personal opinion)’*
- **No:** *‘because i want to’*

- **No:** *'Finance jobs such as accountancy often pay a lot higher in a city'*

3. The event

- Only 36% said that there were specific organisations they wanted to contact about future opportunities.
- The event changed 15% of student's perception about the types of futures available in Cornwall, 41% 'maybe' and 44% 'No'.
- Overall, 49% had an above average experience, 43% average, and 8% below average.

● Strongly agree ● Agree ● Neutral ● Disagree ● Strongly disagree

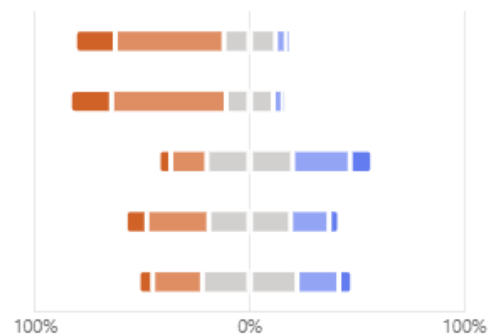
The event was well organised

The event included a variety of local businesses

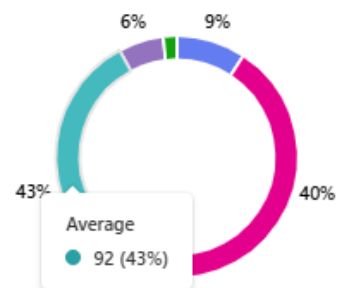
The businesses at the event were relevant to my future career aspirations

I received useful information at the event, which will help me learn more about career options

The event made me feel more confident about my future career



| | |
|-------------|----|
| ● Excellent | 20 |
| ● Good | 87 |
| ● Average | 92 |
| ● Poor | 13 |
| ● Very poor | 4 |



4. Best parts

- *'different business'*
- *'variety of job sectors involved'*
- *'how it was laid out'*
- *'the stories people were telling about their jobs'*
- *'it gave me an idea of what collage is like'*
- *'the free stuff'*
- *'the free advice'*
- *'there was food'*

- *'the fact that all the people were friendly and easy to talk to'*

5. Areas for improvement

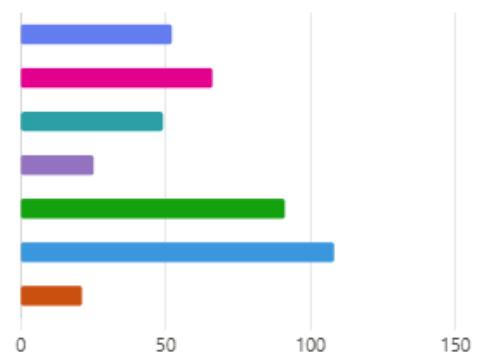
- *'idk'*
- *'Nothing'*
- *'we did not get enough time'*
- *'how it was laid out'*
- *'How disorganised it was'*
- *'The beginning of the event- which mind you was the longest- was simply everyone (that is a student) being sat on the floor'*
- *'we weren't given enough insight on what the businesses actually did'*
- *'a lot of the same types of businesses such as holiday parks'*
- *'nothing related to the career i am interested in'*

6. Business wish list (for 2026?)

- *'lawyers'*
- *'RAF'*
- *'the army and police'*
- *'estate agencies'*
- *'more sporting organisations'*
- *'construction'*
- *'electrician plumbing building and more'*
- *'primary schools'*
- *'Newquay airport'*

7. Future support desired

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| ● Interview practice | 52 |
| ● CV preparation | 66 |
| ● Mentorship and guidance | 49 |
| ● Networking opportunities | 25 |
| ● Training | 91 |
| ● Practical experience | 108 |
| ● Other | 21 |



C. Next Steps

1. Short term

- Gain data from other schools and year groups.
- Analyse the open questions more effectively and undertake data analysis if desired (i.e., year group against aspirations).
- Share the impact and headlines for additional publicity.
-

2. Medium-term

- Network with the businesses which align with student aspirations and requests (i.e., RAF) for future events and interventions.
- Create new interventions for students to engage with (i.e., to gain experience and receive training) via the businesses who showed interest with future activities.
-

3. Long-term

- Make improvements for next year's event (i.e. parking, more schools, include more YR11-12)
- Ensure there is more time for engagement, and that arrival is more efficient by schools.
- Review layout of event site and integrate a quiet time into the days programme.
- Keep key aspects of the event (i.e., bingo)
- Aspire to reconnect with the business to explore additional support for students.