



Attracting hard-to-reach groups

Practical ways for care providers to reach young people and others too often locked out of work

West Midlands Adult Social Care Skills & Recruitment Summit

WHO WE ARE

ReGenerate – helping business to do good

We are an **independent charity** helping employers hire brilliant people too often locked out of work.

HOW WE WORK

1

Convene employers

Our Employer Alliances bring businesses together to hire untapped talent and learn from each other.

2

Turn it into practice

Frameworks, tools, guidance and hands-on support, so you don't start from scratch.

3

Get government behind it

We work with government to shape how they can help businesses to take action – like the £3,000 Youth Jobs Grant.

THE CHALLENGE

Rising demand needs a new source of recruits

7%

of the care workforce is under 25 –
vs 12% across the wider economy

44

average age of a care worker –
27% are aged 55+

410,000

extra posts needed by 2040 to
keep pace with an ageing
population

30,000

overseas recruits this year – down
from 50,000, visa route now closed

To meet rising demand, reaching new pools of talent is key – people who might have never previously considered a career in care.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The talent is out there

981,000

16–24-year-olds are NEET (13%) –
more than 1 in 8 young people

1 in 3

care leavers aged 19–21 are not in
education, employment or training

84%

of NEET young people want a job
or training

700,000+

unfilled vacancies across the UK
economy

Gain a dependable new source of talent, while giving a first chance to people facing barriers to work.

WHO WE MEAN

Barriers you can remove

Care leavers

Young people who are NEET

People with mental health conditions

People with disabilities

People who are homeless

They don't know care is a **career**

Lack of awareness or incorrect assumptions about care.

No networks or **experience**

Individuals may not hear about open roles or know how to apply.

Recruitment **screens them out**

CV gaps, rigid "essential" criteria and formal interviews sift good people out.

Practical **hurdles**

Travel costs, digital access, confidence and employer trust are barriers.

None of this is about ability or talent. These barriers can be removed, often at little or no cost to businesses.

THE BUSINESS CASE

Why recruiting these groups pays off

~50%

want to recruit from these groups

~10%

actually do

98%

retention with the right support in place

30%

lower staff turnover

80%

of employers rate them highly on morale & performance

£35k

saved per vacancy filled & kept

20%

fewer sick days

51%

of people who quit cite a lack of belonging

Individuals from these cohorts are loyal, motivated and resilient – the qualities care depends on. In sectors stretched by turnover, the real advantage isn't just filling a role, but **keeping it filled**.

THE APPROACH

A proven five-stage journey



Three key steps:

1. **Attract** – make care visible and go to people
2. **Recruit** – lower the barriers at your door
3. **Retain** – support people to stay

Above all, **start small – one first step, not doing everything at once.**

ATTRACT

Reaching people who might not consider care

1

Show care as a career

Advertise the career, not just the vacancy: show progression the non-caring roles.

→ DO THIS

Review your "careers" page.

2

Reach them through local partners

Reach people in the communities they're in, via colleges, schools, Youth Hubs.

→ DO THIS

A chat with your council or local college.

3

Offer a low-risk first step

A visit, taster shift or placement lets both parties test the fit before committing.

→ DO THIS

Host 1-2 young people for a day.

IN PRACTICE



Severn Trent started small with just 4 care leavers in 2024, in their care-leaver work-experience programme.

RECRUIT

Small tweaks avoid good people being screened out

1

Hire for values, not CVs

Adopt a values-based advert over experience; cut “essential” criteria that aren’t essential.

→ DO THIS

Trim your must-have list to minimum needs.

2

Rethink the interview

Offer an informal chat or paid taster shift, and focus on strengths and potential.

→ DO THIS

Replace one formal interview with a paid taster shift.

3

Make it easy to apply

Simplify the application process, accept different routes in and offer support.

→ DO THIS

Add a number to adverts to offer help applying.

IN PRACTICE



John Lewis Partnership rethought interviews, offering guaranteed interviews, welcome tours and advance questions.

RETAIN

Helping new recruits thrive

1

Offer a buddy

A named mentor in the first few months can help with any bumps in the road.

→ DO THIS

Assign one colleague as a buddy.

2

Support line managers

Support for line managers to adapt, learn and be flexible.

→ DO THIS

Check-in with line managers to understand needs.

3

Show a path to progress

People stay when they feel they belong and can see where they're heading.

→ DO THIS

Map possible next steps and tell them about it.

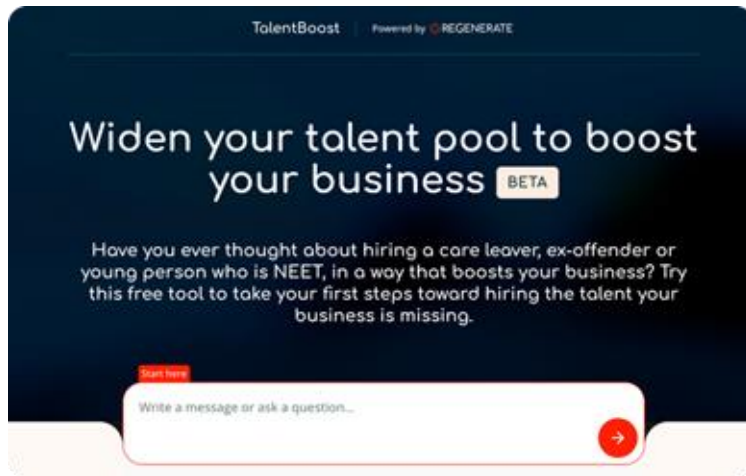
IN PRACTICE



Toyota GB equipped and supported its managers to help people thrive through reverse mentoring and coaching.

GET STARTED

TalentBoost is a free AI tool that gives you practical, bespoke advice on hiring the talent your business is missing.



talentboost.org.uk

Ask it **ONE** question
before you leave
today!

The Untapped Talent Summit (London)

Learn more

Thursday 19 November 2026

10am–1pm, ODEON Luxe West End,
London

GET INVOLVED



Book your place!



Thank you

Start small – one group, one action,
one hire.

re-generate.org

Get in touch

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