

A photograph of a barber with a beard and a cap, wearing a dark t-shirt, cutting a customer's hair. The barber is using a pair of scissors and has his hands on the customer's head. The customer is wearing a black barber cape. The background is a barbershop with various tools and equipment visible on a counter. The lighting is warm and focused on the barber and customer.

What could good jobs look like in Mile Cross?

Topics from the Open Space conversation on
1st November 2022 at
The Phoenix Centre, Mile Cross, Norwich

This pamphlet is a brief summary of the conversations that happened during the Good Jobs Project Open Space event on 1st November 2022, at the Phoenix Centre in the Mile Cross ward of Norwich.

The participants were asked to discuss the question “What could good jobs look like in Mile Cross?” and formed their own agenda for the day from participant suggestions.

We discussed:

- Valuing skills and experience
- Jobs with variety and room for growth
- Jobs which contribute to the community
- Shining a spotlight on hospitality work
- Pay and non-monetary incentives
- Better contractual arrangements
- How to interest employers in improving jobs

Valuing skills and experience

- Many jobs are seen as low-skilled in society or the media but involve their own set of skills and experience that is not always valued by others. One example is care work – which is important and if not done well, can really affect people’s lives.

“People’s skills need to be recognised”

- Where people have skills / experience but may not currently be using it in their role or may not be in work (retirement / illness), it would be good to have opportunities to share these within the community in some way.

“Matching older people’s experience with young people’s needs”

Jobs with variety and room for growth

- Jobs could be made more interesting in many ways.
- Sometimes jobs can be interesting at the start when you are learning but quickly become stagnant – employers could pay more attention to keeping workers learning and interested.

Better contractual arrangements

- Short contracts cause feelings of insecurity and poor wellbeing for workers.
- They are also linked with high staff turnover – which may be counterproductive for the employers if they want good staff to stay.
- Greater flexibility to choose hours (where possible) could help people with better work/life balance.

Shining a spotlight on hospitality work

- There is concern that hospitality is not taken seriously as a career, so is treated with a lack of respect and pay.
- Unionisation is uncommon and many workers do not realise unions exist, so there is scope for raising awareness of what unions are and do.
- Society has a role to play in challenging a ‘them and us’ server and served mentality, which could involve paying more and showing more respect.

“We are much more a two-tiered society than even 20 years ago. The rich are served by the poor.”

Pay and non-monetary incentives

- Fair pay is important (especially in the current cost-of-living crisis) and should especially be improved in recognition of unsociable hours: weekends, bank holidays, Christmas.
- Other (non-monetary) things are important too, like:
 - Training for personal and professional growth
 - Using skills and experience
 - Seeing meaning in the work
 - Feeling your contribution is recognised
 - Having enough time and energy left to follow your interests and family time outside work
 - Learning how better to relate to others for a good work experience.

“You could study alternative working methods that give more work satisfaction, pride and involvement”

Jobs which contribute to the community

- Hidden knowledge and skills in the community could be brought out for social benefit (see earlier point under valuing skills and experience).
- Community can mean many different things (by place, by group, by interest etc.) so rather than thinking of Mile Cross as one community, this may instead be

about encouraging interactions and inclusive support for each other wherever a 'community' feel could be created across boundaries and stereotypes.

- Sometimes employers run volunteering days for team-building purposes in their organisations, but what if they used their professional skills to help on those volunteering days to support community groups in the area with the type of support they need?

“Employers could take a community sharing approach to corporate social responsibility”

How to interest employers in good jobs

- Help employers understand worker wellbeing is in their best interests too – it can have a transformative effect on performance and retention.
- It seems important to keep raising awareness that there are lots of alternative ways of doing things in businesses. These are possible - there are already many good things being done in businesses in the region. People need to know about options.
- Sometimes small businesses can be time and resource poorer for training, but they have the advantage of being small and more easily being able to foster good relationships via chatting, role-modelling, coaching and mentoring too.

Concluding the event

At the end of the event Helen and Ritchie from the Good Jobs Project shared the resources they had already made from previous phases of the project.

These are an infographic, handbook and FAQ document on what employers can do to improve the experience of work for workers, in a win-win way.

The resources have been generally well-received by workers and employers alike and are available free to anyone here:

www.evolve workplacewellbeing.org/4-boosts-for-frontline-workers/

*A big thank you
to all involved!*

To find out more about the

Good Jobs Project

visit:

www.evolveworkplacewellbeing.org/4-boosts-for-frontline-workers/

