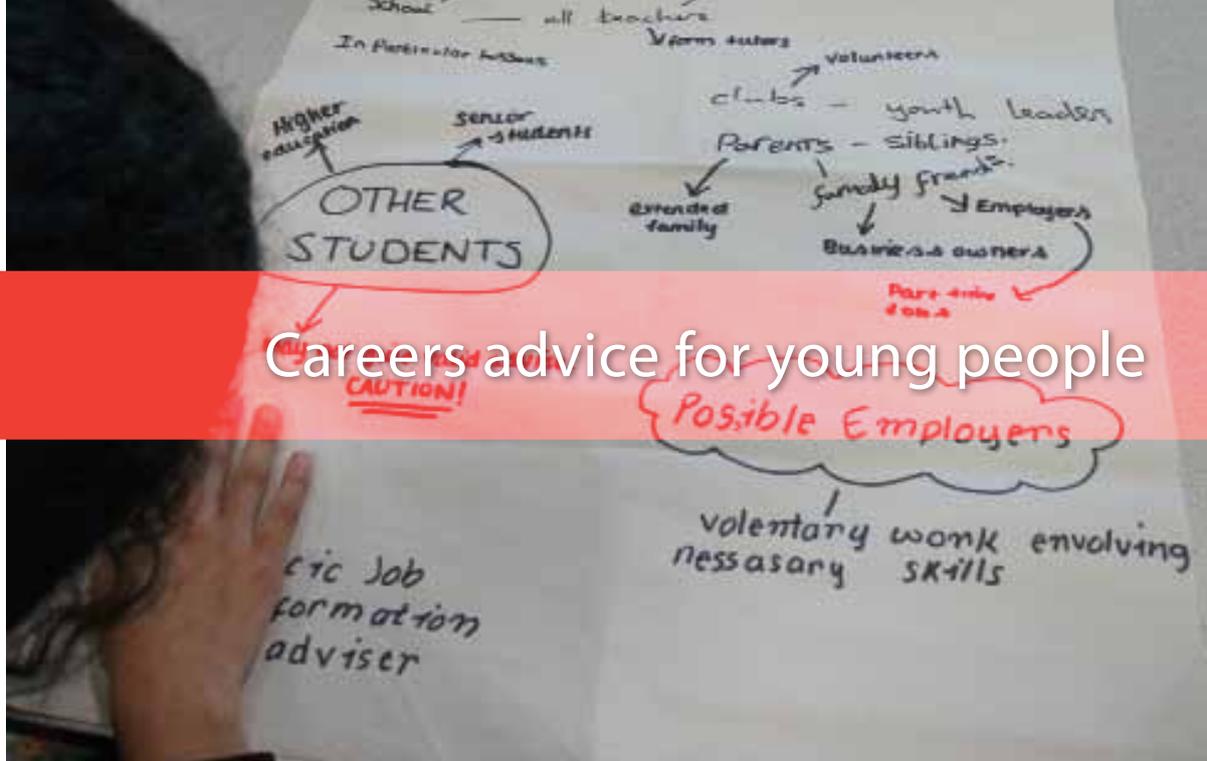


EURO  
CITIES



## Careers advice for young people

# BEACH - online employability advice

Like many cities, Brighton & Hove is faced with above average youth unemployment. BEACH (Brighton & Hove Employability Advice and Careers Hut) is a website that was developed to improve young people's employment chances. It offers employability advice specifically relating to the local situation and was designed for young people, by young people

The city began developing the website in 2011 in response to a legislation change ('raising the participation age'). This calls for young people to remain in learning (full time school, apprenticeship or employment with training) until the academic year in which they turn 17, and from summer 2015, until their 18th birthday. Brighton & Hove wants to equip its young people with the right skills and knowledge to help them enter the workplace.

### By students, for students

Young people are the driving force behind BEACH. In the first development phase the city brought together a group of students to discuss employability skills and expectations. Next, the students interviewed employers from Brighton & Hove's main employment sectors to find out what they were looking for and what opportunities are out there. Clips from these interviews can be found in the 'meet some employers' section of the website.

Once the ground work was done, the students brought together the information they had collected and worked with web developers to create the website.



I got involved with the BEACH site because young people need to know what skills employers are after and there was nothing out there which was useful to young people. Interviewing employers on what skills and experience they look for was a great idea because this information is essential for school leavers.

*Tahys Rodriguez, aged 15*



cities in action

February 2014

where: Brighton & Hove, UK  
what: social affairs  
when: 2011+

## Targeting Brighton & Hove's NEETs

The website aims to improve young people's employment prospects and reduce the number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET). To keep talent in the city, young people worked specifically with employers from Brighton & Hove's growth sectors.

The process also helps engage local employers in young people's training and development. The BEACH website is used as a teaching resource within schools, but is also accessed independently by students and parents.

A dedicated 'BEACH patrol' is responsible for the marketing and dissemination of the website. This is a group of students selected each year to act as ambassadors for BEACH. They travel to job fairs, present in school assemblies and at parents' evenings and are responsible for developing a marketing plan to increase awareness of BEACH.

## Funding and support

BEACH was developed on a budget of €20,000 using grant money allocated to Brighton & Hove by the department for education to support the implementation of the 'raising the participation age' policy.

Some services were provided free of charge, such as venue hire and contributors' time, so the majority of the budget went on film making and web development.

## A valued resource

It is still early days for BEACH. The process began in December 2011 and the website was launched in September 2012. The BEACH patrol is working hard to promote the website within schools and intends to carry out a survey among teachers to measure the impact BEACH has had on individual schools.

All of Brighton & Hove's nine secondary schools are using BEACH as a teaching resource,

although only six are actively involved in the website's development. The city is encouraging the remaining three schools to get involved.

The plan now is to hold another employer event with a different group of students to develop new videos for BEACH, with the help of local university students studying digital media.

The model is easily replicable in other cities, and has already grabbed the attention of other local authorities. The site includes an 'about BEACH' section so cities can find out how the website was developed. A similar site called Take Off is currently under development in the Gatwick Diamond area.

Brighton & Hove won the 2013 EUROCITIES 'smart jobs' award for BEACH.



What started as an opportunity for students to learn about the employability skills needed to get a job in Brighton and Hove turned into an amazing sustainable resource called BEACH!

**Kirsten Trussell, 14-19 engagement team manager, Brighton & Hove City Council**

