

# Outcomes, impact and learning



## Overview of actions

The festival increased student understanding, shifted perceptions and improved provider-college dialogue. Attendance was strong, satisfaction high and visibility for LSIP widened. Impact included stronger pipelines, follow through actions and richer partnerships. Learning emphasised the importance of student preparation, strong visual assets, clear expectations of providers and embedding the event annually for sustained engagement.

## What's been achieved?

**“There was just a little bit of magic dust that Roxy Potts brought from her involvement in the national event – the belief that it would work – and when it all came together on the day, the venue, the energy and the atmosphere made it feel really very successful.”**

**Eddy McDowall**, Chief Executive, Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers

**“The structured agenda worked brilliantly. The panel and motivational speaker warmed students up, so when they visited stands, they were confident and engaged.”**

**Simon Barrable**, Engagement Officer,  
Thames Valley Berkshire and Oxfordshire LSIPs

The Care Connection festival delivered measurable value for LSIP's care priorities by engaging students and providers in a high energy, interactive environment that strengthened understanding of career opportunities and improved awareness of sector expectations.

- **Strong attendance and representation** – Over one hundred students and a diverse range of residential and home care providers participated, giving learners a balanced, realistic overview of the sector.
- **High satisfaction ratings** – Post event surveys consistently scored the experience at 9.5/10, reflecting students' and teachers' approval and confidence in the festival's relevance and usefulness.
- **Positive perception shift** – Students reported feeling more inspired and informed, with descriptors moving from “challenging” or “hard” beforehand to “fulfilling” and “rewarding” after taking part.
- **Clearer role awareness** – Learners demonstrated improved understanding of a wider range of roles beyond front line care, recognising career paths such as therapy assistants, co-ordinators and specialist support functions.

**“Getting students to do a survey is never that easy, and without an incentive there was no way they would do it. The Goyal Foundation funded two £100 Amazon vouchers. It really benefited us because it pushed students to go round, ask questions and actually complete both surveys. The incentive wasn't just nice to have – it was essential for getting the feedback we needed to show the impact of the event.”**

**Ce'Nedra Goosen**, LSIP Marketing and Events Officer,  
Thames Valley Berkshire and Oxfordshire LSIPs

# What impact has this had?

The festival produced lasting benefits for students and providers, strengthening interest in the sector and expanding LSIP's visibility across organisations not previously engaged in workforce activity.

- **Interest levels increased significantly** – Student interest rose from 7.8 to around 9 out of 10, with more participants expressing enthusiasm for further exploration, work experience or future employment.
- **Enhanced college-provider dialogue** – Providers and educators established new relationships, leading to richer conversations about skill requirements, curriculum adjustments and opportunities for collaborative activity.
- **Raised LSIP visibility** – Providers unfamiliar with LSIP activity expressed interest in becoming involved, demonstrating the festival's value in extending engagement beyond the existing partnership network.
- **Stronger student follow through** – Learners reported concrete next steps, including researching roles, seeking placements and exploring apprenticeships that align with their new understanding of social care careers.

**“The event gave students real insight into social care before they made career decisions. It wasn't just a showcase – it created meaningful conversations and opened doors for future collaboration.”**

**Siobhan May**, Co-ordinator, Thames Valley Berkshire and Oxfordshire LSIPs

**“Events like this help build relationships across the entire system – care providers, local authorities, voluntary organisations and students. It strengthens the whole network around social care and helps everyone understand how we can support each other better.”**

**Lorna McAleavey**, Deputy Manager, Right at Home Oxford

# Building on the success

The festival created momentum for ongoing collaboration, supporting future LSIP events, strengthening relationships and providing valuable assets to help extend engagement across the region.

- **Catalyst for wider engagement** – Providers who participated began attending follow up partnership meetings, expanding LSIP’s influence and ensuring employer insights continued shaping future activity.
- **Model for replication** – The structured format and interactive design provided a transferable approach now used to guide similar events across neighbouring areas.
- **Increased confidence in LSIP initiatives** – Positive feedback encouraged more providers to contribute to future programmes, boosting trust in shared approaches to talent development.
- **Lasting promotional value** – Photography, film and case studies created a strong visual record that supports future marketing, partner communications and demonstration of impact.

## Future plans

LSIP aims to use the success of The Care Connection festival to create a longer term strategy that strengthens the talent pipeline, deepens provider involvement and supports continual alignment between education and workforce needs across the region.

- **Balancing short and long term pipelines** – While college cohorts support near term recruitment, light touch outreach to sixth forms and other groups will build a sustainable future pipeline for roles across adult social care.
- **Annual event ambition** – The festival will become a recurring regional engagement activity, with plans to expand delivery into Berkshire so both counties benefit from consistent, high quality experiences each year.
- **Integration with curriculum development** – Colleges will use insights from the festival, employer feedback and workforce priorities to refine programmes, ensuring skills such as communication, practical care tasks and digital capability remain central.
- **Enhanced provider involvement and representation** – Future events will broaden the mix of providers, ensuring home care organisations, specialist services and varied role types are visible to learners considering diverse career pathways.
- **Digital engagement tools** – LSIP is exploring online resources and virtual activities to complement in person events, helping maintain momentum and support learners and providers between major festivals.
- **Expanding student participation** – Future festivals will engage a broader mix of learners, including adult returners, apprentices and career changers, strengthening the range of people considering care roles.
- **Exploring themed engagement events** – Targeted events for specific groups – such as part time workers, parents or returners – will help widen participation and diversify the domestic workforce available to local providers.

**“The video was crucial. It wasn’t just about celebrating the day – it gives us something tangible to show future partners, funders and stakeholders. Having a powerful visual record means we can keep building momentum long after the event has finished.”**

**Ce’Nedra Goosen**, LSIP Marketing and Events Officer,  
Thames Valley Berkshire and Oxfordshire LSIPs





## Key learning

**“Thames Valley shows how all the different pieces – relationships, employer engagement and practical action – can come together in a way that genuinely works for employers and actually reflects what the sector needs, rather than what looks good on paper.”**

**Miranda Coates**, Senior Regional Transformation Lead, Skills for Care

These insights highlight what made the festival effective and what should be strengthened for future delivery to maximise impact, improve preparation and support deeper provider-education collaboration.

- Student preparation significantly improved engagement, with colleges that briefed learners beforehand seeing more confident participation, stronger questions and more meaningful conversations with providers throughout the event.
- High quality photos and video increased post event visibility, creating valuable marketing assets and helping partners showcase success, although the lack of a co-ordinated social media approach limited the potential for wider coverage.
- Clear expectations raised the quality of provider engagement – By setting out expectations for interactivity, energy and professionalism, providers delivered higher-quality stands (e.g., for example, offering hands-on demonstrations, bringing staff who could speak confidently about real roles, and creating activities tailored to younger learners). This helped ensure consistently strong engagement and prevented issues such as static leaflet-only tables or inappropriate attempts to recruit students on the spot.
- A well designed event strengthened long term involvement, as providers who attended expressed greater interest in partnership meetings and LSIP activity, demonstrating that impactful experiences can unlock deeper and more sustained collaboration.



**“We’re already planning how to replicate this. The goal is to make it part of LSIP’s annual cycle so engagement becomes continuous, not a one-off.”**

**Siobhan May**, Co-ordinator, Thames Valley Berkshire and Oxfordshire LSIPs

**“We know what worked, what was stressful, and what we’d change. That means the Berkshire event will be smoother, better timed, and even more impactful because the learning journey has already happened.”**

**Ce’Nedra Goosen**, LSIP Marketing and Events Officer,  
Thames Valley Berkshire and Oxfordshire LSIPs