

Ipswich Opportunity Area

Cornerstone Employer Commitments



Introduction

Opportunity Areas are an important part of the Government's plan for improving social mobility through education¹. A geographical spread of 12 coastal, rural, and urban areas were identified with the aim of testing what works in a range of different communities and spreading best practice to other areas of the country.

As part of the Government's Opportunity Area programme, The Careers & Enterprise Company has committed to work in partnership with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), Local Authorities, careers providers, employers and educational establishments to ensure that each of the 170,000 young people at secondary school or college in these Opportunity Areas has four or more encounters with the world of work. An employer encounter is an opportunity to learn from employers about work, employment, and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes. Research carried out by the Education and Employers Taskforce² shows that receiving four or more encounters with the world of work dramatically improves the employment prospects of young people.

In the last year The Careers & Enterprise Company has targeted resources and support to all 12 Opportunity Areas. We have:

- **established** a community of 60 Cornerstone Employers - local and national employers who work together to support young people in their area;
- **provided** the dedicated resource of an Enterprise Coordinator in secondary schools and colleges in every Opportunity Area, and access to an Enterprise Adviser partnered with every secondary school and college; and
- **delivered** a £1 million fund of support to the initial six Opportunity Areas via our Careers & Enterprise Fund 2016 to scale up existing, effective careers programmes.

In Year 1 across the 221 secondary schools and colleges in the 12 Opportunity Areas:

- **70%** of schools and colleges have been successfully matched to an Enterprise Adviser.
- **90%** have completed the Compass self-assessment tool.³
- **Over 300,000** employer encounters have been delivered.
- **Over 150,000** employer encounters have been directly funded through our £1 million Investment Fund available in the first wave of six Opportunity Areas combined, reaching over 40,000 of 60,000 young people in those six areas.

¹ All 12 areas featured in the lowest performing areas (excluding City of London and Isle of Scilly due to size) in both the 2016 Social Mobility Commission's Index (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-mobility-index>) and the Department for Education's own analysis of school performance and capacity to improve published in the Achieving Excellence Areas (AEA) methodology paper (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defining-achieving-excellence-areas-methodology>).

² Percy, C. and Mann, A. 2014. School-mediated employer engagement and labour market outcomes for young adults Wage premia, NEET outcomes and career confidence. In Mann, A., Stanley, J. and Archer, L. (Eds.). Understanding Employer Engagement in Education. London & New York: Routledge, pp.205-220

³ Compass is a free tool for schools and colleges in England, that evaluates careers activity against the eight benchmarks of best practice, known as the Gatsby Benchmarks. The tool was built in partnership with the Gatsby Charitable Foundation, to help schools and colleges easily discover their strengths and find areas for improvement.

The role of business

The collective target is to deliver 43,148 meaningful encounters in Ipswich by 2020. Many employers are stepping forward to deliver programmes of activity supporting young people and improving social mobility. The ways they are doing so include:

1. Local employers delivering encounters to young people in secondary schools and colleges. These include The Careers & Enterprise Company funded activities in each Opportunity Area to boost existing activities (outlined in Appendix 1).
2. Senior business volunteers acting as Enterprise Advisers to support and advise the leadership team of the secondary school or college to shape and implement their careers plans. The Enterprise Advisers in Ipswich are from the following businesses: Process Flows; Concertus; Colbea; Butterflies, belts & braces; Just Recruitment; BT; Source One Consulting; Giving Young People a Voice; Picasso HR and two retired Enterprise Advisers.
3. A small number of local businesses have signed up to become a Cornerstone Employer to drive forward a local strategy of support and engagement, building on the existing activities in the area and ensuring the local need from secondary schools and colleges is met by the business community.

Ipswich Opportunity Area's Enterprise Coordinator is focused on coordinating the above activities to ensure every secondary school, college and young person is reached.

What is a Cornerstone Employer?

A Cornerstone Employer is a business that is invested in the successful and sustainable delivery of careers education for young people and commits to join a leadership group of local businesses to support the schools, colleges and young people in their area. The Cornerstone Employers work together with their networks and the wider business community to ensure all young people have the opportunities they need to be prepared and inspired for the world of work.

Cornerstone Employers may be large or small businesses, at local or national level, but it is important that they are:

1. **experienced** in engaging with education and so can lead by example and share their experience with other businesses;
2. **dedicated** to investing time and resource to benefit schools, colleges and young people;
3. **committed** to working with other Cornerstone Employers in an Opportunity Area or Careers Hub;
4. **willing** to galvanise their business networks in the area, to collaboratively meet the needs of schools, colleges and young people; and
5. **focused** on sustainability and act as an ambassador and champion for social mobility.

Ipswich Opportunity Area's priorities

In setting its priorities, the partnership board has focused on areas where the Opportunity Area's time and resources can achieve the best combination of short-term impact and sustainability, balancing action to support the majority of young people and help for those facing the most severe challenges.

The Ipswich Partnership Board has identified the following priorities based on the needs of its schools and young people:

- 1** | Ensure all children in Ipswich are prepared to learn for life by developing key behaviours such as resilience and self-regulation.
- 2** | Strengthen the teaching profession in Ipswich by providing world-class support and development.
- 3** | Improve attainment for disadvantaged pupils by embedding evidence-based practice in the teaching of English and maths.
- 4** | Inspire and equip young people with the skills and guidance they need to pursue an ambitious career pathway.

Priority 4 Targets for 2020/21 are

- By 2021, 95% of disadvantaged young people will be in a sustained positive destination (in education, employment or training) for at least the first two terms after finishing key stage four.
- By 2021, 90% of disadvantaged young people will be in a sustained positive destination for at least the first two terms after finishing key stage five.
- By 2021, 44% of disadvantaged young people will go on to Higher Education.
- By 2021, the percentage of sixteen to eighteen-year olds who are NEET⁴ will be half what it was in September 2017.
- By 2021, all schools in Ipswich will have achieved at least six of the eight Gatsby Benchmarks.

Key figures of Ipswich



17

No. of secondary schools & colleges



8,758

No. of pupils



43,148

Encounters target⁵ over 3 years

4. Not in Employment, Education or Training

5. An "employer encounter", in the terminology of Gatsby Benchmarks, is an opportunity to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.

The Cornerstone Employers in Ipswich will focus on:

1. Connecting schools and colleges to employers.
2. Bespoke support for those with additional needs (SEND⁶ & Pupil Referral Units).
3. Creating meaningful employer encounters.
4. Providing meaningful workplace experiences, targeted to support local need.
5. Delivering employer mentoring.
6. Promoting social mobility and supporting equal opportunity.
7. Galvanising business support through customer/client networks to support the delivery of our commitments.
8. Celebrating success, promote Opportunity Area and Cornerstone work and sharing best practice.



As outlined in our delivery plan, we intend to improve the achievements and life chances of the children and students of our town and to do that we need a ‘whole community’ effort. Businesses have a key role to play here and, together with the Cornerstone Employers, we call on all local businesses to support the delivery of this plan to meet the needs of our schools, colleges and young people in Ipswich.

Richard Lister,
Pro-Chancellor University
of Suffolk and Chair of
Ipswich Opportunity Area
Partnership Board

Cornerstone Employers in Ipswich



BT

British Telecommunication Adastral Park is BT's global research and development headquarters, employing over 3,000 scientists and engineers. It is also home to BT's network control centres for half of the UK's broadband network and the whole of its international network across 178 countries.



East of England Co-operative

The East of England Co-op is the largest independent retailer in East Anglia. It has branches across Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire and has been serving communities for 150 years and is owned by over 280,000 members. Each year it invests parts of its profits to support communities across Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire.



Grant Thornton

Grant Thornton

One of the world's largest professional services network of independent accounting and consulting member firms with offices in Ipswich. Grant Thornton provides a range of support including apprenticeships. Enterprise Advisers, work experience and careers fairs.



Ipswich Building Society

UK building society with headquarters in Ipswich, 12 locations and 140 employees across Suffolk. Ipswich Building Society supports young people in a variety of ways including through a bespoke financial literacy programme which staff deliver to Year 2 and Year 10 students as well as prison inmates.



John Grose

John Grose is a multi-franchise dealer group established in 1888 with a turnover of £150 million, employing four hundred staff and is ranked one of the top Ford Dealers in the country. Employees provide extensive and varied support to young people through activities such as CV and employability workshops, mock interviews sessions and enterprise activities.



Lloyds Banking Group

Lloyds Banking Group is a financial services group with millions of UK customers and a presence in nearly every community. Lloyds Banking Group provides a national social mobility programme and a programme to support good school governance and leadership.



Morgan Sindall

Morgan Sindall is the construction and regeneration group employing 6,400 people and delivering complex projects from construction and infrastructure to fit out, property services, partnership housing, urban regeneration and investments. Divisions look for ways to partner with young people to encourage and support them with careers in construction.



Suffolk County Council

Raising the Bar is a Suffolk County Council's initiative to improve levels of educational attainment across the county. The council offers apprenticeships and graduate programmes to young people along with work experience, apprenticeships, internships, supported internships, industrial placements, graduate traineeships and schools based graduate internships.



Ipswich Town Football Club

Ipswich Town Football Club is a professional football club located in Ipswich, Suffolk. The club runs a Category Two Academy. Ipswich Town Football Club is a hub of the local community and offers a range of outreach programmes to support young people in Ipswich and offers work experience, mentoring, stadium tours and careers talks.



Realise Futures

Realise Futures operates six social businesses across Suffolk, covering retail, manufacturing, catering and horticulture. All our social businesses offer employment and opportunities to adults with disabilities or those that are disadvantaged. Opportunities include work experience, site visits and mentoring.

Cornerstone Employer Commitments

The Cornerstone Employers will coordinate their efforts and engage further employers with the aim of offering a range of targeted, quality activities throughout the academic year 2018-19, in accordance with the needs of the secondary schools, colleges and young people in Ipswich Opportunity Area. These commitments, and progress against them, will be reviewed at least quarterly and updated as appropriate.

Examples include:

1 Connect schools and colleges to employers		
Who	Category	Commitment
BT	Enterprise Adviser	Provide two Enterprise Advisers and ensure a succession plan is in place.
Grant Thornton		
Ipswich Building Society		
Morgan Sindall		Provide an Enterprise Adviser and sure a succession plan is in place.
East of England Coop		
John Grose		
Ipswich Town FC		
Realise Futures		
Suffolk County Council		
Lloyds Banking Group		

1 | Connect schools and colleges to employers

Who	Category	Commitment
All*	Enterprise Adviser	All representatives of Cornerstone Employers that are also Enterprise Advisers to encourage their school to report data on encounters to The Careers and Enterprise Company.
All*		Promote the role of Enterprise Adviser and work with the Enterprise Coordinator to ensure each educational establishment has minimum one and potentially two Enterprise Advisers to work with. New Enterprise Advisers to be buddied with those more experienced.
All*		One Cornerstone Employer representative to attend the Enterprise Adviser Network meetings (termly) to provide an update and a link to the Enterprise Adviser business community. Company to be agreed for each term as the quarterly meeting.

2 | Create meaningful employer encounters, with a particular focus on disadvantaged pupils and 15-18 year olds that are NEET

Who	Category	Commitment
All*	Employer encounters	Support the ambition of The Careers and Enterprise Company to have all employers engage with at least one young person for every seven employees in your local office.
Ipswich Building Society	Employer involvement in curriculum	Ensure every School in Ipswich has used the Financial Literacy programme in 2018-2019 academic year.
East of England Co-op	Business games and enterprise competitions	Deliver enterprise activities based on local need.
Lloyds Banking Group		Increasing encounters through enterprise activities, based on local need.
John Grose		Support enterprise activities including Suffolk Skills Show and other careers events.
Morgan Sindall		Deliver enterprise activities and enterprise competitions based on local need.
BT		Speed networking event hosted at their office for those 15-18 who are NEET.
East of England Co-op		Employer talks
East of England Co-op	Employer talks	Organise a panel debate to showcase career opportunities in food, drink and agriculture in the East of England for schools and local business leaders.
John Grose		Deliver careers talks.
John Grose		Mock interviews/ CV workshops (transition skills)
Suffolk County Council	Deliver employability workshops based on local need.	
Morgan Sindall		
Grant Thornton		
Suffolk County Council		
Ipswich Building Society	Careers fair	Support careers fairs.
Morgan Sindall	Careers talks	Deliver careers talks.
All*		Cornerstone Employers to deliver a schedule of careers talks based on local need, advised by Enterprise Coordinator.

3 | Provide meaningful workplace experiences, targeted to support local need

Who	Category	Commitment
All*	Experiences of the world of work	Support the ambition of The Careers and Enterprise Company to have all employers offering a minimum of one workplace experience (inspiration day or work experience placement) for every 25 employees in your local office.
Ipswich Building Society	Workplace visits	World at Work day.
John Grose		Provide workplace visits based on local need.
BT		Ensure every Ipswich Opportunity Area school has visited BT Showcase Suite to learn about STEM careers.
Ipswich Building Society	Work experience (1-2-week block)	Work with Enterprise Coordinator to ensure workplace experiences are targeted to meet local need.
Lloyds Banking Group		Ensure students have preparation and follow up exercises to make the experiences more meaningful.
East of England Co-op		
John Grose		
Suffolk County Council		
Grant Thornton		

4 | Deliver employer mentoring

Who	Category	Commitment
Lloyds Banking Group	Mentoring	Deliver employer mentoring. Work with the Enterprise Coordinator to ensure this meets local need.
Morgan Sindall		
Suffolk County Council		

5 | Promoting social mobility and supporting equal opportunity

Who	Category	Commitment
All who have graduates in their local teams*	Championing social mobility	To provide min. two graduates to speak with students in schools and colleges at an assembly or Year Group session (to be agreed with the school/college) to share their story and hints/tips.
All who have apprentices in their local teams*		To provide min. two apprentices to speak with students in schools and colleges at an assembly or Year Group session (to be agreed with the school/college) to share their story and hints/tips.
All*		Encourage employees to deliver a talk at their old school.
John Grose		Provide two graduates and two apprentices to speak with students in schools and colleges at an assembly or year group session.

6 | Galvanise business support through customer/client networks to support the delivery of the Cornerstone commitments

Who	Category	Commitment
All*	Championing social mobility	Send communications to customer and supply chain networks to explain your role as a Cornerstone Employer and ask them to offer their support to deliver activities, as required, by contacting the Enterprise Coordinator [template for communication to be provided by the The Careers and Enterprise Company].
All*		For the schools where you have staff acting as an Enterprise Adviser, advertise particular requests from these schools to your networks.
All*		Cornerstone Employers to hold a wider employer business breakfast as a collective, frequency to be determined, to ensure the 'ask' of the local business community is in line with the needs of the schools and colleges and addresses Opportunity Area priorities. Cornerstone Employers to host and invite their networks to attend.
Suffolk County Council		Identify which council-led contracts could require engagement with schools and colleges.
Ipswich Town FC		To advertise (could use the The Careers and Enterprise Company campaign, once ready), across its stadium to encourage businesses to get involved with their local school/college.
Ipswich Town FC		To support messages to parents, as required by the Opportunity area, by acting as a channel of communications on match day (flyers, posters, etc).

7 Celebrate success and promote Opportunity Area and Cornerstone work		
Who	Category	Commitment
All*	Sharing best practice	Share a min. of one case study per term which showcases your work with schools, together with your hints/tips for other businesses to follow your example. The Careers and Enterprise Company campaign to provide template.
All*	Championing social mobility	Work with Enterprise Coordinator on a potential workshop with The Careers and Enterprise Company campaign funded programme providers, National Citizen Service, the Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach (NEACO) and any other local programme providers as relevant, to understand their programmes and any volunteer or support requirements to identify opportunities to collaborate or spread the call for volunteers through your networks.
All*		Provide list of all schools and colleges in the Opportunity Area that your organisation is working with so that the Enterprise Coordinator can identify any gaps in distribution to be addressed.

* The ambition of The Careers and Enterprise Company is that all Cornerstone Employers work together to achieve the Cornerstone commitments laid out in this plan. In order to achieve a specific commitment, the contribution of individual employers is likely to vary, for instance some employers may take a lead whilst others support. This reflects the diversity of Cornerstone Employers in terms of industry, size and resourcing. Specific commitments are discussed, and activities set at quarterly roundtable meetings.

* Cornerstone Employers, where possible will tailor encounters to support those with additional needs (SEND & PRU) to ensure the provision is inclusive and supportive. For example, all learners will benefit from a multi-sensory experience which will be more meaningful and memorable for them. Additionally, employers will support with disabled access, such as wheelchair uses.

Appendix 1

Programmes and activities funded by the The Careers and Enterprise Company and selected by schools and colleges in the Ipswich Opportunity Area

Provider	Descriptions	Programmes
Connect Education & Business	Connect Education and Business is an Ipswich based not for profit charity made up of expertise from both Education and Business sectors. We support employers and schools across the East of England to find information, support, and training to engage in work experience, work-related learning opportunities and career-planning educational activities.	Work experience
Form the Future CIC	Form the Future CIC is a social enterprise with a mission to connect young people to a world of career possibilities; inspire them to dream big and empower them to fulfil their potential. We achieve this through active employer engagement.	Work experience
Engineering Development Trust	EDT delivers over 40,000 STEM experiences each year for young people aged 9–21 across the UK. Our range of work provides opportunities for young people to enhance their technical, personal and employability skills through industry-led projects and specialised taster courses. We help develop partnerships, building links between educators and industry employers.	First Edition, GO4SET, STEM Family challenge and Routes into STEM
Future First	Future First is a national education charity helping state schools to build thriving alumni networks. Among the alumni of every school is a host of inspiring work and education role models who can support schools in a whole range of ways.	Core Programme & World of Work Days
All Together	We are a leading careers education company helping students to build their future through a strengths-based and purpose-centred approach to career development, with employer and entrepreneur led activities to inspire and develop work readiness for a fast-changing future of opportunities and challenges.	Enterprise Incubator, Young Entrepreneur, Ignite Your Genius, Genius Plus and The Mock Interview Project

For further details about provider programmes, please visit The Careers & Enterprise Company's Provider Directory: <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/find-activity-provider>

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Provider	Descriptions	Programmes
Business in the Community	Business in the Community (BITC) exists to build healthy communities with successful businesses at their heart. BITC – the Prince’s Responsible Business Network - is a business-led membership organisation made up of progressive businesses of all sizes who understand that the prosperity of business and society are mutually dependent.	Enterprise activities, Employer supported career learning and Workplace visits
Founders4Schools	F4S is dedicated to improving the life chances and employability of disadvantaged young people by connecting them to leaders of successful, growing businesses in their community. In doing so, we aim to improve social mobility, decrease the skills gap, and boost economic growth in the UK.	Work experience and Work experience workshop

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