

Oldham 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 400,000** employer encounters have been delivered.
- **Over 250,000** 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 94,395 meaningful encounters in Oldham 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 Oldham are from the following businesses: Remedian, Purple Carrott Consulting, North Ainley Solicitors, RBS Plc, NHS, GMP, Methods Digital, Chartered Institute of Insurers, Great National Hotels & Resorts Group Ltd, The Christie, Business Purpose & Marketing Ltd, BBC and Willmott Dixon.
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.

Oldham 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.

Oldham Opportunity Area's priorities

The Partnership Board prioritises work which provides support to the majority of young people, whilst also helping those facing the greatest disadvantage. The Partnership Board supports projects which can address the underlying barriers to social mobility, by using its role to drive systemic change and to build capacity within new ways of working across a range of partners, (including Oldham Council, who are strongly supportive of this approach). This delivers short term impact, whilst also ensuring a longer term, sustainable improvement in social mobility for the children and young people of Oldham.

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

1 | Ensuring all children are school ready by the age of five.

2 | Raising attainment for all, and raising it fastest for disadvantaged pupils.

3 | All children and young people to be ready for life, learning and work.

Priority 3 Targets by 2020/21 are:

- Every 11 to 18-year-old in Oldham to benefit from at least four high-quality encounters with the world of work, with more than 90,000 high-quality encounters delivered to over 19,000 young people in Oldham over the life of this plan.
- We will build parity of esteem for technical education by developing a sustainable and attractive model of delivery, piloted in the construction sector, which provides young people with genuine pathways into good careers and which meet the needs of local employers.

Key figures of Oldham



18

No. of secondary schools & colleges



19,160

No. of pupils



94,395

Encounters target⁴ over 3 years

⁴An "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 Oldham will focus on:

1. Connecting schools and colleges to employers by recruiting more Enterprise Advisers to ensure every school and college has access to this support.
2. Creating meaningful employer encounters.
3. Identifying ways to work with schools in providing young people with support on mental health.
4. Promoting social mobility and supporting equal opportunity.
5. Galvanising business support through customer/client networks to support the delivery of our commitments.
6. Celebrating success and promoting Oldham Opportunity Area and Cornerstone work.



We are working hard to ensure young people in Oldham get the best start in life and leave school and college with the right grades, skills and attitudes for university, a job or an apprenticeship. Real social mobility does not come just from improving the school system but depends on making it easier to access decent jobs, with good prospects, that bring in a fair salary. Cornerstone Employers and local businesses play a crucial role in delivering this ambition.

James Kempton
Independent Chair, Oldham Opportunity Area Partnership Board



Every young person should be given the best possible start in life and in Oldham we're committed to improving education outcomes for all to support this. However, the futures of our young people aren't just dependent on good grades. We need to strengthen the link between education and business so young people get the right opportunities to fulfil their potential and employers get the skills they need locally.

Sean Fielding
Leader, Oldham Council

Cornerstone Employers in Oldham



Diodes

Diodes Incorporated is a leading global manufacturer and supplier of high-quality application specific standard products within the broad discrete, logic, analog and mixed-signal semiconductor markets. Diodes serves the consumer electronics, computing, communications, industrial, and automotive markets.



First Choice Homes Oldham

First Choice Homes Oldham is a 'not for profit' housing association, formed for the benefit of the community. Its charitable objects are to provide and manage housing, including social housing, and providing assistance to help house people and associated facilities. First Choice Homes Oldham has a history of the local community with support with employment and skills, most recently engaging with schools and colleges in the area under a new education offer.



Lloyds Banking Group

Lloyds Banking Group is a business that has been on our high streets for more than 250 years and today has more than 27 million customers. At the heart of the company's digital transformation and desire to keep pace with changing customer demands is its Helping Britain Prosper Plan, which focuses on the areas in which it believes it can make the biggest difference. This includes 22 specific targets designed to tackle some of the social and economic issues that matter most to Britain, and its people, businesses and communities.



Unity Partnership

Established in May 2007, Unity Partnership delivers property, highways and engineering, exchequer, transactional finance, ICT and customer services; bringing innovative solutions, driving efficiencies and reducing costs for every client. We provide professional, outsourced services to both public and private sector clients, specialising in local authorities and the education sector.



Web Applications

Web Applications UK is a bespoke software company developing systems for the travel industry. Our strong relationships with schools, universities and community enterprises has allowed us to engage students in recruitment events, hackathons, Code Clubs, and offer invitations for tailored work placements. Training and development is vital for the IT industry and a key part of our company's ethos; to have a positive impact. Our work in education is an investment in the future of our industry and community.



Willmott Dixon

Willmott Dixon is a privately-owned contracting and interior fit-out group. Founded in 1852, we are dedicated to leaving a positive legacy in our communities and environment and in 2018 were one of only six companies to receive a Queen's Award for Enterprise in the promoting opportunity through social mobility category. We create value for customers, stakeholders and communities by working in a sustainable and responsible way to shape the built environment and make a positive impact to society's well-being.



KPMG

A global network of professional firms providing Audit, Tax and Advisory services.

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 Oldham Opportunity Area. These commitments, and progress against them, will be reviewed at least quarterly and updated as appropriate.

Examples include:

1 Connecting schools and colleges to employers by recruiting more Enterprise Advisers to ensure every school and college has access to this support		
Who	Category	Commitment
All*	Enterprise Adviser	To advocate the Enterprise Adviser Network through existing channels and promote/include the Oldham Enterprise Coordinator as the point of reference.
All*		One Cornerstone Employer representative to attend Enterprise Adviser Network meetings (termly) to provide an update and a link to the Enterprise Adviser business community.
All*		Each to provide two Enterprise Advisers and ensure a succession plan is in place.
Wilmott Dixon		Provide an Enterprise Adviser and ensure a succession plan is in place.
First Choices Homes Oldham		To create and deliver partnerships with four secondary schools in Oldham including the Pupil Referral Unit and FE college.
First Choices Homes Oldham		Provide an Enterprise Adviser and ensure a succession plan is in place.
KPMG		Recruit at least two Enterprise Advisers and ensure that all schools in the Opportunity Area have access to the latest information on pathways into KPMG and KPMG's numeracy toolkits supporting National Numeracy Day in May.

2 | Create meaningful employer encounters

Who	Category	Commitment
All*	Work experience (1-2 week block) and/or Work experience (regular/weekly commitment)	All Cornerstone Employers to consider increasing the variety of experiences of the world of work that they can provide, including one day visits, part-day visits, traditional one or two week experiences, digital experiences, and to ensure that sufficient preparation and follow up is enabled. All to seek support from the Enterprise Coordinator as required.
Web Applications		Increase volume using established, structured and high-impact work experience model, for both students and teachers.
Willmott Dixon		Provide work experience opportunities, working with the Enterprise Coordinator to ensure these meet local need.
Unity Partnership		Provide 15 work experience placements.
Diodes		Provide 12 work experience placements ranging from one week to one month.
Willmott Dixon	Workplace visits	Provide workplace visits, including site visits and talks with guest speakers such as including job roles other than trades to increase the understanding of variety of roles available.
Unity Partnership		Provide workplace visits.
Willmott Dixon	Employer involvement in curriculum	Provide maths support for a specific Opportunity Area school across multiple year groups including skills challenges and curriculum-based workshops and activities. Curriculum support includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team building - Giant Tetrahedron - Electrical/electronic circuits - Enterprise day - design, plan, cost the building.
Web Applications		Provide coding clubs for students and potentially to include teachers in order to build skills and increase sector knowledge.
Web Applications	Employer talks	Provide careers talks on a case by case basis of school requests.
Willmott Dixon		Provide careers talks based on local need.
Unity Partnership		Provide careers talks based on local need.
Web Applications	Internships and holiday placements	Providing eight internships per year.
Diodes		Provide 3 Year in Industry placement students commencing in Summer 2018.

2 | Create meaningful employer encounters

Who	Category	Commitment
First Choice Homes Oldham	Employer encounters	<p>Provide a minimum of 800 employer encounters maximising First Choice Homes Oldham as an employer with young people 4-19 years. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers carousels bespoke to students interests (11 per year) based on local need. • Careers talks based on local need. • Community involvement e.g. homelessness project. • Employability workshops based on local need. • Mock interviews based on local need. • Targeted interview support for those not continuing to HE.
First Choice Homes Oldham	Employer involvement in the curriculum	<p>Provide employee support and materials for curriculum based on local need.</p> <p>Provide curriculum linked work experience and work shadowing opportunities within FCHO and supply chain.</p>
First Choice Homes Oldham	Experiences of the workplace	<p>To deliver at least 50 work experience opportunities. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailored work experience linked to interests for 50 pre-16 students. • Host visits to First Place (eight per year for secondary schools). • Hold visits to First Place (four per term for FE college). • Offer work experience and shadowing opportunities within FCHO and supply chain for young people at risk of becoming NEET.
Lloyd Banking Group	Mock interviews/ CV workshops (transition skills)	Run a tailored programme of employability activities.
KPMG	Transition skills	Work directly with over 500 students from Oldham across at least 4 schools through employability programmes delivered with the Transformation Trust (WorkReady) and MyKindaFuture.
KPMG	Employer engagement	KPMG volunteers to attend school assemblies to talk about skills identified on student feedback.
KPMG	Apprenticeships	All schools in Oldham to receive information about KPMG 360, KPMG Digital and KPMG Business Services apprenticeship programmes.
KPMG	Careers fair	Attend area-wide careers events and provide information on pathways to KPMG.

2 | Create meaningful employer encounters

Who	Category	Commitment
KPMG	Careers fair	Work with 5 schools in Oldham through the numeracy speaking tour in partnership with WE Schools.
KPMG	Experiences of the workplace	Promote KPMG's Year 12 Discovery work experience programme and support travel / accommodation costs where required.
Diodes	Apprenticeships	Recruit three Engineering Apprentices and one Site Facilities Apprentice (recruited three previous apprentices in 2018 into Permanent Technician roles).
	Careers fair	Attend Career fairs, Primary Engineer events, EDT Assessors, Manufacturing Institute support and support for career days on Diodes site in Oldham.
	Business games and enterprise competitions	Supporting The Challenge and The Challenge Dragons Den.
All*	Employer encounters	Ensure that you are engaging with at least one young person for every seven employees in your local office.
All*	Experiences of the workplace	Ensure that you are offering a minimum of one work place experience (inspiration day or work experience placement) for every 25 employees in your local office.
All*	Employer mentoring	Support with mentors and promotion of mentoring opportunity through grant recipients: The Princes Trust, Reach Out UK, Engineering Development Trust, Young Enterprise, Mahdlo, OnSide, TeenTech and FutureFirst funded via the The Careers & Enterprise Company Investment Fund.

3 | Identify ways to work with schools in providing young people with support on resilience and wellbeing

Who	Category	Commitment
All*	Employer engagement	Cornerstone Employers to act as liaison between Oldham's specialist mental health adviser working with schools, and the Cornerstone community.
All*		Consider how to support/align existing activity with the 'Oldham Pledge' allowing thousands of young people to undertake additional activities to build their skills, resilience and employability.
First Choice Homes Oldham	Place based initiative	Host a drop-in support service at Holts and Lees for KS3 and KS4 students at risk of becoming NEET.
First Choice Homes Oldham	Mentoring	Recruit employees to mentor FE college students who are at risk of becoming NEET or in need of wider personal development.
KPMG		Connect schools and Enterprise Advisers to a range of national education providers committed to improving mental health provision in schools.

4 | Promote social mobility and support equal opportunity

Who	Category	Commitment
First Choice Homes Oldham	Summer programmes	Activities in summer holidays for secondary-post-16 transition. One day per week for six weeks – a mix of work shadowing, confidence building, community volunteering, healthy lifestyles and partnership working e.g. with Street League.
First Choice Homes Oldham	Traineeships	Deliver a traineeship programme in partnership with a traineeship providers to support young people who are not expected to move into FE.
First Choice Homes Oldham	Mentoring	Recruit employees to mentor FE college students who are at risk of becoming NEET or in need of wider personal development.
First Choice Homes Oldham	Parental engagement	Provide wrap around support for families.
Lloyds Banking Group	Mock interviews/ CV workshops (transition skills)	Provide a tailored programme of employability activities.
Unity Partnership	Apprenticeships	Recruit 23 apprentices annually.
		Apprentices to work in schools within the Opportunity Area to elevate the profile of apprenticeship opportunities and mentor cohorts of students within five schools.
Unity Partnership	Mentoring	Support a specific college through the mentoring programme.
		Support EDT with mentors for Go4Set programme.
		Mentors from Diodes support the Go4Set Programme.
Willmott Dixon	Teacher CPD	Mentors from Diodes support the Go4Set Programme.
Diodes		Provide Teacher CPD based on local need.
Web Applications		Offer Teacher CPD placements to support industry specific knowledge and input into the curriculum which reflect the work of work.
All*		Experiences of the workplace

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

Who	Category	Commitment
All*	Employer engagement	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.
All*		For the schools where you have staff acting as an Enterprise Adviser, advertise particular requests from these schools to your networks.
All*	Employer engagement	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 Areas priorities. Cornerstone Employers to host and invite their networks to attend.
First Choice Homes Oldham	Employer engagement	Work with supply chain to deliver employer encounters and work place experiences. Develop a list of preferred partners and to coordinate activities with these partners to support those at risk of becoming NEET.
KPMG	Employer engagement	Host a business roundtable to drive forward employer engagement with schools in Oldham Opportunity Area. Invited guests to include KPMG clients and suppliers, local MPs, The Careers and Enterprise Company and DfE

6

Celebrate success, promote Opportunity Areas and Cornerstone work and share best practice

Who	Category	Commitment
Unity Partnerships	Sharing best practice	Provide a case study of specific area of activity to share best practice across the network and inspire other employers to engage in education and careers.
Web Applications		
Willmott Dixon		
KPMG		Provide case studies of work in Oldham Opportunity Area and support with press engagement.
All*		Share a minimum of one case study per year which showcases your work with schools, together with your hints/tips for other businesses to follow your example.
All*		Work with Enterprise Coordinator on a potential workshop with The Careers & Enterprise Company funded programme providers, National Citizen Service, National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) 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.

* The ambition of The Careers & 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.

Appendix 1

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

Grant Recipient	Programme details
Mahdlo Youth Zone	Choosing Futures enables young people from Oldham schools and colleges to attend a series of five business breakfast networking events. Each event will be a mixed session attended by local businesses, and will feature a keynote speaker from one of the target industry sectors: advanced manufacturing, business and professional services, creative and digital, and health and social care.
OnSide Youth Zones	A six-week course supporting young people to develop the skills and knowledge to make better informed, positive career choices, and a successful transition from education into employment through employer delivered employability skills workshops.
EDT	Participants enhance their STEM technical, personal and employability skills through industry-led projects and specialised taster courses. Package includes STEM Day; STEM Family Challenge; STEM team project introducing STEM employability skills - GO4SET.
Young Enterprise	Young Enterprise helps young people develop key employability skills, financial capability and entrepreneurship. The Young Enterprise offer consists of four activities - Learn to Earn; Employability Masterclass; Tenner Challenge Plus; The Company/Team Programme.
Teen Tech	TeenTech helps young people, their teachers and parents understand the real opportunities in science, technology, engineering, construction and manufacturing.
Future First	Supporting schools to develop an alumni community.

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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