

Developing Suffolk Talent



February 2017 Update

This report highlights the main developments within the Suffolk Skills and Employment Programme over recent months.

Work Inspiration - a package of virtual and actual opportunities for employers and young people to connect

Careers and Enterprise Company Programme

The New Anglia Enterprise Adviser Network is continuing to recruit Enterprise Advisers to work strategically with senior leaders in Suffolk's secondary schools and colleges. By January 2017, 29 Enterprise Advisers were matched with schools. Schools and colleges in Suffolk are mostly keen to join the network and waiting to have an Adviser matched to them. The businesses already involved include Adnams, Norse, Ipswich Building Society, Abbeycroft Leisure, East of England Co-op, University of Suffolk, Atwells, Morgan Sindall, Adecco, Abellio Greater Anglia and BT.

ICanBeA...

This joint venture between the local authorities across Suffolk and the Mason Trust is showcasing economy, careers, training and employers to local young people. Following the successful launch last October, the website is progressing well. The number and diversity of online profiles is increasing, and there are now 165 live profiles on the site covering 19 employment industries, all with accompanying information, links and videos. The icanbea... team are currently working on a number of draft profiles, engaging new employers and keeping existing profiles updated and relevant for the audience.

Young person engagement has been ramping up and the icanbea... team have been attending events engaging with 1000s of young people from across the county including Suffolk Skills Show 2016, Suffolk Festival of Learning (teachers and senior managers), plus numerous school and college events. The total signups* at the end of January was 887 with 694 of those being under 25s. (*sign ups indicate a user having a personal profile on the website)

Overall the website profile is growing and the site has registered 16,417 page views in January 2017 and an impressive 38,285 page views since October 2016.

Suffolk Skills Show 2017

SSS17 has made a strong start to the year with the Vice Chair Dayle Bayliss stepping up to Chair and Michelle Pollard of Spider Recruitment taking the Vice Chair. Along with a number of developments we are pleased to announce a new 'Job Hunter' attraction for employers to promote actual work opportunities (vacancies) where they can collect CV's, conduct informal interviews and give specific recruitment advice to those who are actively looking for work.

As for previous years, the success of the event is dependent on support from the business community and our schools bringing the key audience on the day; to facilitate this we have made a number of changes based on feedback and updated the website to reflect more of what our businesses want, we run an 'early bird rate' and already have over a dozen exhibitors booked.

Looking at school bookings, we will be opening the school booking function this year with an accompanying media and communications plan to ensure effective engagement and preparation with our schools. Our ambition for 2017 is to surpass the numbers for the SSS16 event with over 100 exhibitors across multiple stands and 5000 attendees including an impressive 616 independent drop ins.

Young Flourish

Emerging from the Flourish Conference on Rural Issues back in October; Young Flourish was created to take the conference findings and introduce them to over 200 14-25 year olds collecting their thoughts, experiences, and opinions; and crucially ideas/solutions to the challenges faced by those living in rural communities across Suffolk.

The project included an open access online survey which was completed by 75 participants and face to face facilitated sessions with 7 schools and one youth group from rural areas across the county:

- Ixworth Free School (21 participants)
- IES Breckland (18 participants)
- Stour Valley (30 participants)
- Stowupland (19 participants)
- Saxmundham Free School (21 participants)
- Thomas Mills (11 full participates est. as drop in an assembly to promote survey)
- Stradbroke (20 participants)
- Fresh Aspirations Forum (Framlingham youth organisation 6 participants)

Key feedback from these sessions has been collated in to a Young Flourish Report and recommendations have been made. The report will be used in the development of the 'Skills and Aspirations for Young People' sub-strand and will be considered at the Flourish Board meeting in Spring 2017 as to it use in the emerging Flourish Rural Action Plan for Suffolk.

STEM Accelerator

The STEM Accelerator programme comes to an end in March 2017. Over the past two years in excess of 600 pupils have benefited from the project. The mentoring and curriculum enrichment strands will continue to help boost the chances of Suffolk students to compete for the top level jobs and educational places until March. Additionally, nine "STEM School Activity Weeks" have engaged pupils from year seven upwards in employer led out of school activities together with work experience, to enthuse their interest in STEM. An evaluation identifying the impact and lessons learned from the delivery of the STEM Accelerator Pilot will be produced and shared widely.

Aiming High 16-18 - learning pathways for all supported by high quality careers guidance

Apprenticeships

It's full steam ahead for Apprenticeships Suffolk with Apprenticeship week! We have finalised

our plans and will be at Otley College, West Suffolk College, Suffolk New College, Lowestoft College, Suffolk One and Lowestoft Sixth Form between 6th-10th March. We are collaborating with icanbea... for the week and will be delivering information about apprenticeships and icanbea... providing interactive sign up workshops and attending careers fairs. Toolkits for Apprenticeship Week will be available for schools to download so that support from Apprenticeships Suffolk can be accessed county wide. We are very much looking forward to our Apprenticeship Week adventure!

Increasing opportunities for young people with special needs

The Suffolk SEND Further Education and Learning Committee continues to develop and is currently taking a lead role in developing high quality post 16 SEND Provision as part of the Post 16 Area Review. The committee has recently approved to commission Archant to support a social media and media campaign to showcase the opportunities available to Employers in Suffolk by offering Supported Internships for young people age 16-25 with SEND. Work is ongoing to review the current post 16 offer of SEND provision in the county and we hope to publish a clear and current set of learning pathways in the Spring of 2017.

Improving support for young people who are at risk of becoming NEET

A new transition support offer was implemented in 2015/16 to provide better support to young people in Year 10 & 11 who are at risk of becoming NEET when they leave school. This service has been valued by schools, parents and young people and we have seen early signs of success. In November 2016, 89% of young people who were supported by a Transition Coach in Year 11 (2015/16) had made a positive, sustained progression to post 16 learning. The Local Authority will continue to build this preventative model and is committed to ensuring the service is further developed. This preventative model forms a major part of Suffolk's Participation and NEET Prevention Strategy, which will be refreshed and re-published in the Spring.

Improving the Quality of Information, Advice & Guidance

Each year Suffolk CC evaluates the quality of careers advice and guidance and all additional measures a school or provider has in place to maximize post-16 Participation. Participation Reviews take place to consider the measures the school/provider has in place to encourage, enable, and assist young people to participate in education or employment with training until their 18th Birthday. Where development needs are identified on-going monitoring and support is provided to ensure schools continue to improve their careers support. Suffolk County Council has also developed training courses for careers advisers to support this programme. The next round of Participation Reviews will commence in the Spring 2017.

Locality Reviews – Participation and NEET Prevention

As part of building Suffolk's Participation and NEET Prevention Strategy we will be undertaking a series of Locality Reviews to identify what is working well and what needs to be fixed to further reduce NEET. The results of these reviews will help to inform practice across the county and the over-arching strategy as a whole. We plan to begin the first review in April in Bury St Edmunds and the West of the county as this is an area we are concerned about with regards to the lack of post 16 provision and the growing number of young people who are NEET. We will then prioritise Ipswich, Lowestoft and Central and South Suffolk.

Learning and Work

MyGo

The Service for young people MyGo Lowestoft is now open and will extend the development of the MyGo model by piloting a different delivery approach using more staff from existing local partners to deliver the service. Therefore, we now have the Ipswich centre based model, the

Greater Ipswich outreach approach, including Stowmarket centre and the Lowestoft model running. All three will be evaluated to draw out the most successful and cost effective approach. Planning is at a very early stage to explore how the youth employment service could be extended across the remainder of Suffolk.

Suffolk's Adult Education Offer

In August 2016, Suffolk County Council awarded Realise Futures Learning and Development with a contract to deliver our Adult Learning Contract. Over £2.7m of funding is being used to deliver a full range of skills and community learning provision across the county. Our target is to reach over 8,000 learners through a range of programmes that include Traineeships, English and Mathematics, ESOL, Family Learning and many more.

Work and Health Programme

The curtailing of the devolution agreement for Norfolk and Suffolk has changed our role in co-commissioning the work and health programme (WHP). The programme for Suffolk will now form part of the national programme delivered in non-devolution areas.

In response to these changes Suffolk together with Norfolk have designed a localised work and health programme supported by New Anglia LEP to be funded by the European Social Fund which will support the benefit claimants that are ineligible for the WHP. This will ensure that with both programmes aligned more people will be able to benefit from the support tailored to their needs. The procurement of both programmes will run over the coming months with a start date for delivery due for the beginning of next year once the current programme has concluded.

Suffolk districts and boroughs will also benefit from Transformational Challenge Award funding that has been allocated by Suffolk leaders to develop an integrated work and health offer for the county. This funding will act as the enabler to attract other funding in order to provide an end to end service for residents who require support to overcome their health barriers to employment.

Skills for Growth - *skills as a growth enabler*

NALEP Skills Investment Fund

The fund provides support for employers to help them invest in securing the right skills for their workforce.

Employer Training Incentive Pilot NOW FULLY ALLOCATED

Delivered through Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, the 'ETIP' scheme has now allocated the total funding available through more than 2800 grants. The scheme provides employers with grants of up to 40% of the cost of purchasing training and courses to upskill the workforce in Norfolk and Suffolk. By incentivising employers across the region to invest in the skills in their workforce the scheme aimed to increasing the capacity of local businesses to grow and employees to progress.

New Anglia Skills Deals Programme an opportunity for employers, alongside training providers, to seek funding for project proposals that address a gap in - or barrier to accessing - training provision. Skills Deals co-fund projects that will raise skill levels, create jobs and drive enterprise and economic growth in Norfolk and Suffolk. Up to £4m is set to be invested in Skills Deals projects depending on demand. Three projects have now been provisionally allocated funding focuses on enhancing energy efficient skills in construction, new welding and fabrication provision and provision for those working in agri-tech related positions.

Two further initiatives are set to begin delivery. **Skills Support for the Workforce**, to be delivered by Seetec, will provide no-cost training needs analysis and provision to employers to help upskill the current workforce whilst **Skills Support for Emerging Leaders**, to be delivered by New Anglia Colleges, will focus on provision of leadership and management training, again at no cost to the employer.

Sector Skills Plans

NALEP Skills Board has invited employers in key growth and employment sectors to work with them to develop co-owned skills plan that address the skills needs of their sector and highlight priorities for action/investment. Plans have so far been developed for the construction and health and social care sectors and are now being put into action. The plans are helping to inform decision making by the Skills Board and the allocation of resources. A further 8 sector plans and associated data packs will be developed in 2017.

Skills Capital Funding

A proportion of Growth Deal funding from Government has been allocated to Skills Capital projects in Norfolk and Suffolk. The new £7m engineering facilities at West Suffolk College are progressing with the first phase (purchase) completed and development work for a new Energy sector focused facility in Lowestoft is progressing. It is expected that further Growth Deal funding to be allocated to the New Anglia region shortly will be made available for further potential skills capital investment.

Other Developments

European Social Funding for Skills and Employment

Specifications for activity to be funded through the New Anglia LEP European Social Fund have now been produced and are due to be published in the spring. For the unemployed, the funding will support the long term unemployed and people with health related issues progress into employment, the further roll out of the MyGo service and support for the youth pledge.

For people in employment one specification will support the health and social care sector to recruit, retain and upskill employees and another specification will provide support for businesses to adopt the pledge marque.

Further specifications are being developed which are due to be published in a second tranche in the summer to provide additional support for individuals and businesses.

Norfolk and Suffolk Post 16 Area Review

The Post 16 Area Review commenced in December 2016. The Steering Group is chaired by Dr Peter Funnell and is due to conclude at the end of March 2017. We have worked with Norfolk County Council and the New Anglia LEP to outline our key priorities and have asked providers to reflect on and take action to strengthen the learning pathways for all young people and adults that enables progression into work. In particular, to addressing the gaps in provision that develops entrepreneurial and softer skills, highlighted as important by employers, Apprenticeships and education for those with special educational needs and disabilities. We are keen to increase the number of Apprenticeships, with a focus on progression to advanced, higher and degree level learning and to increase the range of high

quality engagement provision that is focused on supporting people who become NEET and progress them into sustainable employment.

Developing and expanding our higher level and technical programmes, both in further and higher education, to provide a more tailored offer to support growth and productivity gains in our key industries and emerging sectors more effectively is also a key priority.