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The Arc
High Street
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To: Chair & Members of the Local Growth Scrutiny Committee

Contact: Angelika Kaufhold
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Friday, 17 October 2025

Dear Councillor

LOCAL GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Local Growth Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council to be held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Tuesday, 28th October, 2025 at 10:00 hours.

Register of Members' Interests - Members are reminded that a Member must within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes to their Disclosable Pecuniary Interests provide written notification to the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

You will find the contents of the agenda itemised on page 3 onwards.

Yours faithfully

J. S. Fieldsend

Solicitor to the Council & Monitoring Officer

Equalities Statement

Bolsover District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and when delivering the services it provides to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations between all groups in society.

Access for All statement

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- **Phone:** 01246 242424
- **Email:** enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
- **BSL Video Call:** A three-way video call with us and a BSL interpreter. It is free to call Bolsover District Council with Sign Solutions, you just need WiFi or mobile data to make the video call, or call into one of our Contact Centres.
- Call with Relay UK - a free phone service provided by BT for anyone who has difficulty hearing or speaking. It's a way to have a real-time conversation with us by text.
- **Visiting** one of our offices at Clowne, Bolsover, Shirebrook and South Normanton

LOCAL GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
AGENDA

Tuesday, 28 October 2025 at 10:00 hours taking place in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne

Item No.		Page No.(s)
	PART A - FORMAL	
1.	**Apologies For Absence**	
2.	**Urgent Items of Business** To note any urgent items of business which the Chair has consented to being considered under the provisions of Section 100 (B) 4(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
3.	**Declarations of Interest** Members should declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Non Statutory Interest as defined by the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of: a) any business on the agenda b) any urgent additional items to be considered c) any matters arising out of those items and if appropriate, withdraw from the meeting at the relevant time.	
4.	**Minutes** To consider the minutes of the last meeting held on the 8th July 2025.	4 - 8
5.	**List of Key Decisions and Items to be Considered in Private**	9 - 13
6.	**Dragonfly Shareholder Board**	**Verbal Update**
7.	**East Midlands Investment Zone (EMIZ) - Sprint Projects Update**	14 - 189
8.	**UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Economic Development Projects (Monitoring Update)**	190 - 202
9.	**Scrutiny Work Programme**	203 - 208
	PART B - INFORMAL	
	The formal meeting of the Local Growth Scrutiny Committee ends here. Members will meet informally as a working party to carry out their review work. This part of the meeting is closed to the public, so members of the public should leave at this point.	

LOCAL GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Local Growth Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Tuesday, 8th July 2025 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Sally Renshaw in the Chair

Councillors Tom Kirkham (Vice-Chair), Justin Gilbody, Duncan Haywood, Jeanne Raspin and Jen Wilson.

Officers:- Karen Hanson (Chief Executive), Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Natalie Etches (Head of Business Growth, Dragonfly Management (Bolsover) Limited), Jim Fieldsend (Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer), Thomas Dunne-Wragg (Scrutiny Officer) and Matthew Kerry (Governance and Civic Officer).

Also in attendance at the meeting, observing, were Councillors Rowan Clarke (Junior Portfolio Holder for Growth), Tom Munro (Portfolio Holder for Growth) and John Ritchie (Portfolio Holder for Devolution).

LOC1-25/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Will Fletcher.

LOC2-25/26 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

LOC3-25/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

LOC4-25/26 MINUTES

Moved by Councillor Jeanne Raspin and seconded by Councillor Jen Wilson
RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Local Growth Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 18th March 2025 and an Extraordinary Joint Scrutiny Committee (CSSC & LGSC) meeting held on 12th June 2025 be approved as true and correct records.

LOC5-25/26 LIST OF KEY DECISIONS

Members considered the updated List of Key Decisions provided at the meeting.

To a question on the "Appointment of a Contractor to Complete Phase 2 of the Flood Defence Works at Pleasley Vale", the Committee was informed the first phase was repairing the damn wall, with the second phase being to increase capacity via desilting the ponds along with the clearing of the culverts – this would increase water flow through the site.

To a question on the "Shirebrook Re:imagined – Update on Regeneration Funded Works", the Committee was informed it had been approved by Shirebrook Town Council and a start date was estimated to be July / August 2025. It was expected completion would be before December 2025.

RESOLVED that the List of Key Decisions and Items to be considered in the private document be noted.

LOC6-25/26 BUSINESS GROWTH STRATEGY (DRAFT)

The Head of Business Growth presented the report to the Committee to update Members on the ongoing revision of the Business Growth Strategy (the 'Strategy') and action plan for 2025-29.

It was reiterated that the Strategy, attached at Appendix 1, was in draft form.

The Council's previous Strategy covered 2020-24 and had focussed on how the Development Directorate had prioritised its work (and its work with internal and external partners) to achieve the Council's ambitions over 2019-23.

In April 2024, the Council had launched the new Corporate Plan which had established a vision "to maximise [the Council's] influence and opportunities within the East Midlands Combined County Authority to drive the continued delivery of excellent services, maximise local aspirations and drive economic prosperity for [the] District". It had been underpinned by four main aims: Customers; the Economy; the Environment; and Housing.

The creation of the East Midlands Mayoral Combined County Authority (EMCCA) and subsequent changes to the funding structure had seen more devolved powers in areas including transport, regeneration and investment, housing, and skills be provided to EMCCA's Mayor.

Therefore, the 'Economy' priority to drive growth, promote the District, and be business and visitor friendly should be underpinned by a clear strategy of how the Council would boost economic prosperity across the District, work to respond to the challenge of EMCCA, and maximise the opportunities as and when they emerged.

The Strategy had been refreshed to ensure that the ambitions and priorities reflected the new 'Economy' priority and recognised the emerging five strategic priorities of EMCCA and the D2 Economic Growth Strategy for Derbyshire (to best position the authority to respond to calls for funding and investment).

The 5 thematic areas of the Strategy had been established and were detailed in the report

A working group involving officers from across the Council and both Dragonfly Companies had worked to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the local economy as well identify and document all the different interventions taking place across the different disciplines (incl. regeneration, housing, net zero, planning, and business growth).

The draft document sought to address the economic, social, and environmental challenges the District faced through innovative and inclusive initiatives.

The Strategy would set out the ambition and objectives for a 4-year period, aligned to the Corporate Plan, and defined a clear action plan to achieve economic growth.

To a question on the Green Skills Hub, the Head of Business Growth informed West Notts. College had occupied a floor of Mill 3 and was operational.

To a follow up question on the status of the Shirebrook Net Zero Hub, the Head of Business Growth informed the Council was working with the contractor with work expected to begin September 2025.

A draft report had been prepared by Rider Levett Bucknall UK Ltd., which had invited a number of proposals from numerous organisations and the Council was working through the 7 submissions received to determine what the successful delivery model alongside its business plan.

To a question on the Shared Prosperity Fund, the Head of Business Growth informed the Council had received a year’s extension and towards the end of 2025 confirmation of any future rounds of funding would be received through EMCCA / the UK Government.

For the business support programmes, these were operational and the Council had met the year’s requirement in the first quarter.

Moved by Councillor Jen Wilson and seconded by Councillor Justin Gilbody
RESOLVED that Members of the Scrutiny Committee note the content of the draft document.

LOC7-25/26 PLEASLEY VALE REGENERATION PROGRAMME - MONITORING UPDATE

The Head of Business Growth presented the report to the Committee to update Members on activities which had been carried out at Pleasley Vale Business Park.

P&D Environmental had continued with flood remediation works – work to remove the trees and growth had been undertaken prior to the nesting season, and repairs to the dam wall were underway following the fabrication and installation of the access bridge in May 2025.

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust’s Wild Solutions team had been instructed to conduct a baseline Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment ahead of proposed tree removal and embankment / dam wall repair works. The Baseline Assessment had been undertaken February 2025 (ahead of planned works in March 2025).

The assessment had been undertaken to gather the necessary data required by the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Tool – the overall baseline had been calculated at 4.92 Habitat Units.

In December 2024, the Council had approved funds for investment for identified schemes and additional repairs and works to the mill buildings. The Council had further approved a recommendation for Members to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to establish the post and budget of a Building Surveyor / Contractors Administrator into the Property Services Team of Dragonfly Management (Bolsover) Ltd. (DMBL), to be appointed to manage and oversee the building works and repairs.

Works had commenced under this programme of work – the Senior Engineer of DMBL had instructed a survey of the drains to identify defects, with a scope of systematically working through the site to carry out repairs on the critical lengths that served the current facilities.

Structural surveys had been commissioned for different buildings and structures which were showing signs of deterioration. Works had also commenced on surveying the roof of Mill 1, with a scope for further surveys to be undertaken summer 2025.

A Member appreciated the level of work involved and asked if the Council's tenants were comfortable with the current situation. The Head of Business Growth informed the Council maintained good relations with tenants and where tenants had to be relocated, the Council had only lost 2 tenants (due to the alternate accommodation proving unsuitable for those tenants).

With regards the temporary toilets being utilised (due to necessary repairs to waste systems), the Council was endeavouring to work quickly and financially efficiently to resolve the situation.

To a question on acquiring future tenants, the Head of Business Growth stated no tendering of available spaces was being made until the site's current situation had improved.

Moved by Councillor Jeanne Raspin and seconded by Councillor Duncan Haywood
RESOLVED that Members note the contents of the report.

LOC8-25/26 DRAGONFLY SHAREHOLDER BOARD UPDATE (VERBAL)

The Chief Executive provided a verbal update on the Dragonfly Shareholder Board.

The Shareholder Board had been concentrating on and discussing the Review of Dragonfly Companies (the 'Review') and the proposed action plan at length.

At its Extraordinary meeting on 16th June 2025, the Executive had agreed to commence the process to dissolve the Dragonfly Board as recommended within the review and contained within the action plan.

The externally commissioned Review, conducted by Local Partnerships (experts in their field), had been accepted.

All Dragonfly staff would be kept fully informed and the Council would continue to be fully committed to ongoing projects – work would continue.

The day following the Committee's meeting would see the Council meet to discuss the Review. Local Partnerships would be present to answer any questions. The Executive would meet on 28th July 2025 to consider the next steps.

The Committee was informed the Leader of the Council had invited all Dragonfly Companies staff to a meeting at The Arc, Clowne (and hosted online via Microsoft Teams) on 4th July 2025 to address any questions of the Review. A script of this meeting had been published afterwards on the Council's intranet, Eric.

The Committee were briefly informed of current work completed / undertaken at sites including Woburn, Blackwell and Alder Way, Shirebrook and the Council's Chief Executive informed fortnightly meetings with the Director of Property & Construction (Dragonfly) were taking place.

To a question on the White Swan, Bolsover, the Head of Business Growth informed a revised offer had been made with the Council seeking to close quicker than the owner was anticipating. Following officer inspections of the premises to better know of the premises current condition, the Council's offer was found appropriate.

To a question on the lack of a Delivery Update provided by Dragonfly Development Ltd. for the Committee's meeting, the Chief Executive reiterated the Review had required concentration, and while a version of the Delivery Update was at the Committee, the Director of Property & Construction (Dragonfly) had recently informed further updates were expected shortly – once available, the Delivery Update would be finalised and provided to Members after the meeting. Minutes of the Shareholder Board meetings would also be provided.

LOC9-25/26 AGREEMENT OF WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26

The Scrutiny Officer presented the Work Programme 2025/26 to the Committee, attached at Appendix 1.

4 Quarterly meetings were scheduled for 2025/26.

Moved by Councillor Justin Gilbody and seconded by Councillor Jen Wilson
RESOLVED that Members review this report and the Programme attached at Appendix 1 for approval and amendment as required. All Members are advised to contact the Scrutiny Officer should they have any queries regarding future meetings.

The formal part of the meeting concluded at 10:35 hours and Members then met as a working party to continue their review work. The informal meeting closed at 11:13 hours.

The Arc
High Street
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Derbyshire
S43 4JY

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Agenda Item 5

Key Decisions & Items to be Considered in Private

To be made under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Published on: 8th October 2025

INTRODUCTION

The list attached sets out decisions that are termed as “Key Decisions” at least 28 calendar days before they are due to be taken by the Executive or an officer under delegated powers.

Preparation of the list helps Executive to programme its work. The purpose of the list is to give notice and provide an opportunity for consultation on the issues to be discussed. The list is updated each month with the period of the list being rolled forward by one month and republished. The list is available for public inspection at the The Arc, High Street, Clowne, S43 4JY. Copies of the list can be obtained from Jim Fieldsend, Monitoring Officer, at this address or by email to jim.fieldsend@bolsover.gov.uk. The list can also be accessed from the Council’s website at www.bolsover.gov.uk.

The Executive is allowed to make urgent decisions which do not appear in the list, however, a notice will be published at The Arc and on the Council’s website explaining the reasons for the urgent decisions. Please note that the decision dates are indicative and are subject to change.

Members of Executive are as follows:

Councillor Jane Yates - Leader and Portfolio Holder - Policy, Strategy and Communications
Councillor Donna Hales - Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder - Corporate Governance and Performance
Councillor Mary Dooley - Portfolio Holder - Partnerships and Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Clive Moesby - Portfolio Holder - Resources
Councillor Phil Smith - Portfolio Holder - Housing
Councillor Tom Munro - Portfolio Holder - Growth
Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders - Portfolio Holder - Environmental
Councillor John Ritchie - Portfolio Holder – Devolution

The Executive agenda and reports are available for inspection by the public five clear days prior to the meeting of the Executive. The papers can be seen at The Arc at the above address. The papers are also available on the Council’s website referred to above. Background papers are listed on each report submitted to the Executive and members of the public are entitled to see these documents unless they contain exempt or confidential information. The report also contains the name and telephone number of a contact officer.

Meetings of the Executive are open to the public and usually take place in the Council Chamber at The Arc. Occasionally there are items included on the agenda which are exempt and for those items the public will be asked to leave the meeting. This list also shows the reports intended to be dealt with in private and the reason why the reports are exempt or confidential. Members of the public may make representations to the Monitoring Officer about any particular item being considered in exempt and why they think it should be dealt with in public.

The list does not detail *all* decisions which have to be taken by the Executive, only “Key Decisions” and “Exempt Reports”. In these Rules a “Key Decision” means an Executive decision, which is likely:

(1) **REVENUE**

(a) Results in the Council making Revenue Savings of £75,000 or more; or
(b) Results in the Council incurring Revenue Expenditure of £75,000 or more

(2) **CAPITAL**

(a) Results in the Council making Capital Income of £150,000 or more; or
(b) Results in the Council incurring Capital Expenditure of £150,000 or more

(3) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the District.

In determining the meaning of “significant” the Council must have regard to any guidance for the time being issued by the Secretary of State. The Council has decided that revenue income or expenditure of £75,000 or more and capital income or expenditure of £150,000 or more is significant.

The dates for meetings of Executive can be found here:

https://committees.bolsover.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeId=1147

The Council hereby gives notice of its intention to make the following Key Decisions and/or decisions to be considered in private:

Matter in respect of which a decision will be taken	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Documents to be considered	Contact Officer	Is this decision a Key Decision?	Is this key decision to be heard in public or private session
Contract Award to enable delivery of the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund Wave 3	Executive	3 Nov 2025	Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing	Victoria Dawson, Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement	Key - It is likely to result in the Council making revenue savings or incurring Revenue expenditure of £75,000 or more.	Open
Options appraisal on the future delivery of HRA Stock Condition Surveys	Executive	3 Nov 2025	Report of the Portfolio Holder for Portfolio Holder - Housing	Victoria Dawson, Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement	Key - It is likely to result in the Council making revenue savings or incurring Revenue expenditure of £75,000 or more.	Open
Purchase of Section 106 Properties from Woodall Homes limited - Boleappleton Farm, Bolsover	Executive	3 Nov 2025	Report of the Portfolio Holder for Portfolio Holder - Housing	Victoria Dawson, Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement	Key - It is likely to result in the Council making capital savings or incurring capital expenditure of £150,000 or more.	Open
Management of Corporate Debt - Write-off of outstanding amounts.	Executive	3 Nov 2025	Report of the Portfolio Holder for Portfolio Holder - Resources	Theresa Fletcher, Service Director Finance & Section 151 Officer	Key - It is likely to result in the Council making revenue savings or incurring Revenue expenditure of £75,000 or more.	Open

SCHEDULE 12A
ACCESS TO INFORMATION: EXEMPT INFORMATION

PART 1
DESCRIPTIONS OF EXEMPT INFORMATION: ENGLAND

1. Information relating to any individual.

2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.

5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes –

   (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
   (b) To make an order or direction under any enactment.

7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 28TH OCTOBER 2025

EAST MIDLANDS INVESTMENT ZONE (EMIZ) – SPRINT PROJECT UPDATES

REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR – PLANNING, DEVOLUTION & CORPORATE POLICY

Classification	This report is Public
Contact Officer	Sarah Kay – Interim Director – Planning, Devolution & Corporate Policy

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To provide an update on the progress / completion of the East Midlands Investment Zone (EMIZ) sprint projects:

- Bolsover Green Skills Hub Shirebrook (BDC).
- Engaging Supply Chain Database (BDC).
- Planning Capacity Builder (BDC and NTU).

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

1.1 Through the EMIZ programme the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) invited applications for their Year 1 Sprint Funding in late 2024, with Bolsover District Council (BDC) submitting a number of bids across the three strands of the programme.

- Sprint A: Planning and Development – Over £2 million allocated to pre-development activity and business case preparation across EMIZ sites.
- Sprint B: Research and Innovation – Innovation Roadmaps and 10–12 pilot projects delivered by University of Nottingham and University of Derby.
- Sprint C: Skills – Skills Roadmap and pipeline of interventions developed by University of Derby.

1.2 BDC successfully secured three funding awards, two directly awarded to BDC and one delivered in partnership with Nottingham Trent University (NTU).

i. Engaging Supply Chain Database (BDC) - £75,000.
ii. Planning Capacity Builder (BDC and NTU) - £45,521.
iii. Bolsover Green Skills Hub Shirebrook (BDC) - £249,914.25.

2. Project Updates

2.1 Bolsover Green Skills Hub Shirebrook

2.1.1 Alongside the £2m capital funding already secured for the construction of a green and retrofit skills hub in Shirebrook, funding through the EMIZ sprint programme funding stream was secured to undertake critical pre-development activity to explore the potential delivery model, business case and programme for the Skills Hub with potential partners from further and higher education providers and local enterprises.

2.1.2 A funding agreement between BDC and EMCCA was signed in March 2025 and Rider Levett Bucknall (RLB) were appointed by BDC to undertake this work, with invitations to various partners to work alongside RLB and BDC to develop a delivery concept for the Skills Hub.

2.1.3 Through the project RLB worked with partners to prepare potential delivery plans / options for their use of the Skill Hub. Submissions were received from:

- RNN Group (North Notts College)
- Vision West Notts College
- Chesterfield College
- University of Derby
- Nottingham Trent University
- Elmhurst Energy
- NAPIT

2.1.4 A final report from RLB dated July 2025 (see Appendix 1) has been prepared and received by BDC, documenting the feasibility work undertaken to seek a wider understanding of the potential delivery partners for this project. In accordance with our grant funding agreement, Q1 and Q2 monitoring submissions have been sent to EMCCA alongside submission of the final report.

2.1.5 Current spend position:

Elmhurst Energy Systems Ltd	£2,500.00
RNN Group	£9,166.00
West Nottinghamshire College	£9,166.00
Napit Training Ltd.	£2,500.00
Direct Education Business Partnership CIO,	£7,500.00
University of Derby	£9,166.00
Chesterfield College	£9,166.00
Rider Levett Bucknall UK Limited	£96,130.08
East Midlands Chamber (Derbys, Notts, Leics)	£23,800.00
Bassetlaw CVS	£7,500.00
Nottingham College	£9,166.00
Nottingham Trent University	£9,166.00
Bolsover District Council	£52,083.00
Total:	**£247,009.08**

2.1.6 An internal project team has been assembled to move the project forward. Project progression beyond the expenditure of the sprint funding is a tied to the construction phase of the regeneration fund capital project. The Head of Business Growth and the Interim Director have met with representatives at EMCCA and NTU in September 2025 to ensure ongoing project alignment with future funding opportunities and partner delivery models can be progressed.

2.2 Engaging Supply Chain Database

2.2.1 Funding of £75,000 was secured through the EMIZ sprint programme funding stream to develop a strategy to improve engagement of supply chain SMEs in the housing industry's procurement process. Engaging SMEs in the procurement process is crucial for regional economic growth, especially in the East Midlands where SMEs constitute a significant portion of the workforce. The project explores barriers to SME participation in construction procurement and proposes a platform to facilitate better engagement, supported by industry bodies and aligned with recent procurement reforms.

2.2.2 A funding agreement between BDC and EMCCA to deliver the project was signed in March 2025, with BDC partnering co-consultant specialists of NTU (Ecologic Homes Consultancy) to support delivery of the project.

2.2.3 Progression on this project has been delayed owing to resourcing challenges faced initially by BDC, and evolving market insight about SME engagement by the co-consultant partners at NTU.

2.2.4 Project reporting to EMCCA issued in August 2025 showed engagement to date with 27 SMEs locally, plus a wide range of procuring companies and industry bodies. The project is to be endorsed by EMCCA, with a final report and prototype database targeted for completion by the 30th September. A copy of the draft report is attached at Appendix 2.

2.2.5 Current spending position:

Bolsover District Council	£15,000.00
Nottingham Consultants	£30,683.00
Ecologic Homes Consultancy	£15,000.00
Dr Rose Deakin	£5,180.00
Total	**£65,863.00**

2.2.6 Whilst the anticipated engagement means and project outcomes have evolved during the project process, EMCCA has been updated throughout and remain satisfied with the reported monitoring outputs of this project to date. Future funding to develop from the trial database to a fully functioning model will be explored.

2.3 Planning Capacity Builder

2.3.1 In partnership with NTU, this project undertook a feasibility study to explore whether NTU could prepare an academic curriculum to deliver a Level 4 apprenticeship programme based upon the Royal Town Planning Institute's (RTPI) accredited Level 4 apprenticeship standard for a Town Planning Assistant.

2.3.2 Market analysis and stakeholder engagement sessions were conducted throughout March and April 2025 with regional professionals in public and private practice to consider course design and delivery models. Follow up course compilation / approvals were progressed by NTU, who alongside a BDC representative, met with the RTPI education in May 2025 to discuss the delivery of the apprenticeship programme.

2.3.3 A final report was prepared by NTU and BDC and was submitted to EMCCA on 23rd May 2025 (see Appendix 3) to satisfy the monitoring / reporting requirements on the sprint funding award. BDC received £20,000 of the sprint funding award for their involvement in the project to cover officer time and associated expenses.

2.3.4 In August 2025 NTU and BDC representatives met with EMCCA to support submission of a further expression of interest for Year 2 and 3 funding to launch the course from September 2026 and support a first year dedicated cohort of 10 students employed across regional Local Planning Authority's (LPA). An outcome decision is awaited.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

Appendix No	**Title**
1.	EMIZ Green Skills Hub – Final Report July 2025
2.	Engaging Supply Chain SMEs in the Housing Industry's Procurement Process – Final Report 30th September 2025
3.	Planning Capacity Builder for Net Zero – Final Report 23rd May 2025

Appendix 1

REPORT

JULY 2025

EAST MIDLANDS INVESTMENT ZONE - GREEN SKILLS HUB

FINAL REPORT: FINAL FINDINGS, HUB OPTIONS, BUSINESS CASE AND DELIVERY MODEL

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Prepared By

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Rider Levett Bucknall

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APPENDICES

RLB Rider Levett Bucknall

AUTHORISATION

This report has been prepared by:

Signature…………………………………………………...
Peter Hayakawa, Associate, Sustainability, RLB

and reviewed by:

Signature…………………………………………………...
Mike Bentham, Associate, Sustainability, RLB

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Approver Name	Title/Responsibility	Date	Revision
Richard Winter	Climate Change Officer	ADD	1

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Revision	Date Created/Issued	Reviewed By	Brief Summary of Change
0.1	04/07/2025	Mike Bentham	Internal RLB QA prior to issue to BDC
1	08/07/2025	Mike Bentham	Finalisation of changes following QA

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bolsover District Council (BDC) is leading work with Rider Levett Bucknall (RLB) and a range of partners to develop the business case, delivery model and plan of action for a physical skills and business support hub, and local and regional coordination offer in Shirebrook.

This hub will focus on green jobs, green skills and the Green Economy covering roles that help communities mitigate or adapt to climate change. The Green Economy ties into multiple economic sectors and has seen significant growth in recent years. The Green Economy:

- is already 4x the size of UK manufacturing sector as of 2021[1]
- grew at 3x the rate of the rest of the UK economy in 2024[2]

BDC's work to date has developed green skills concepts and practical pilot activity for the district and the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) region, a region which faces a range of challenges but with workforce strengths and a proud mining, manufacturing and industrial heritage. This work has led to the present physical Green Skills Hub project which is located in Shirebrook at a new build facility and forms part of EMCCA's East Midlands Investment Zone (EMIZ) initiative.

In addition to developing green skills onsite provision with colleges, universities, employers and other key regional stakeholders for this skills and business centre, the district is developing plans for a regional green skills and green business coordination support offer.

Combining onsite provision in an area with no post-16 provision options with a coordination service offer could provide a scalable model for making green skills thrive in the region.

RLB with BDC have developed potential activities at the Green Skills Hub for:

- local business support.
- careers engagement.
- education provision for 14- to 16-year-olds, 16- to 25-year-olds, and across a number of levels.
- flexible short courses for adults 25 years+.
- matching and supporting work experience opportunities.
- identifying course and funding opportunities; and
- identifying local business skills, workforce and pipeline opportunities and supporting access.

This report is the **Combined Final Report** which provides detailed **Business Case** information and a **Delivery Model, ca. 34 pages**, with further appendices collecting the latest economic and attainment data for the district and summaries of partner proposals with costs. It follows an earlier **Education Provision and Employer Needs Analysis (Interim Findings)** and separate **Delivery Options Report** delivered by RLB**.**

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1 UK's green economy nearly four times larger than manufacturing sector, says report | Green economy | The Guardian
2 Britain's net zero economy is booming, CBI says | Green economy | The Guardian

2.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Bolsover District Council (BDC) has been awarded significant capital and pre-development funding to develop a Green Skills Hub (‘the Hub’). This physical skills and business support hub will be based in Shirebrook at Portland Drive in Bolsover and will focus on key sectors including but not limited to construction and retrofit building skills.

The Hub will facilitate collaboration with a wide range of local education providers, employers and communities to realise district-level and Derbyshire/Nottinghamshire-wide Green Economy, attainment and employment ambitions—an offer that fits the needs of young people, workers and businesses in Bolsover and the EMCCA region, brings real opportunities and benefits to them and maximises their potential to lead in the new Green Economy.

2.1 PROJECT OUTLINE AND OUTPUTS

BDC has secured capital funding for the physical new build of the planned hub through UK Regeneration Funding (ca. £2,000,000) and recently secured crucial programme pre-development funding from EMCCA to develop the programme for the Green Skills Hub (ca. £250,000).

PROJECT LOCATION

- Address: Portland Drive, Shirebrook, NG20 8TY
- Planned Site Size: 0.55 hectares, 9,000 m^2 building planned at RIBA 2/3 currently

Figure 1 - Site location of Green Skills Hub in Shirebrook, Bolsover

EMCCA EMIZ PRE-DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

This pre-development funding is awarded as part of the EMCCA’s East Midlands Innovation Zone (EMIZ) funding stream, which leverages the devolved powers of the new combined authority, including a devolved adult education budget, to push forward green economic development.

BDC’s bid has been successful and pre-development activity is being delivered between February and June 2025 to develop the delivery model, business case and initial programme for the Hub.

The aim of the pre-development activity is to make major steps towards launching the Hub, as well as creating a scalable model for how places like Bolsover can bring in capacity from across their region to link green opportunities to local communities on a long-term basis.

KEY PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of this pre-development scope of works for the Green Skills Hub are to:

- Develop the business case, delivery model, initial plan and funding needs for the Hub.
- Identify the formal hub partners and support them to develop their hub delivery plans/options; and
- Collect partner's building and space needs for the capital project (associated with their potential physical utilisation of the building).

2.2 EMIZ EMCCA FUNDING

Bolsover's current project is part of the East Midlands Investment Zone (EMIZ), an EMCCA-wide programme to deliver sectoral and economic growth, with a focus on green economic growth. With a total funding package of £160mn announced in October 2024, this funding will be spread across a 10-year delivery programme (from April 2024). It is important to note that £80mn of the £160mn total, is allocated for the first 5 years of delivery.

This summer (2025), EMCCA will undergo a thorough review of delivery progress to date, in order to confirm allocation of the remaining £80mn of funding. Therefore, securing of funding from April 2029 is dependent on the proven success and value of delivery over the next 5 years.

In responding to the EMIZ funding call, BDC has positioned itself as a partner in delivering EMIZ ambitions, leveraging leadership on green skills development to be included in a range of "sprint" development projects. The opportunity to demonstrate innovative ways to address inclusive growth and attainment challenges in places like Bolsover while delivering key regional aims is exciting.

RLB has supported BDC in an EOI (Expression of Interest) request to support the council with further development funding to work with EMCCA and partners to finalise the plans. RLB also recommends that discussions with EMCCA to clarify the capital and revenue funding possibilities are undertaken soon, which would allow more detailed specification and funding needs.

RLB does not recommend that BDC narrows down delivery partners at this "sprint" stage but rather works this summer (2025) to confirm a refined combined proposal.

It is important to note that BDC is making a substantial capital investment of ca.£2,000,000 of its own regeneration funding to support EMIZ aims for the region, which provides significant opportunities for all partners as well as EMCCA as a whole, but need to discuss with EMCCA to understand the funding for further development post-Sprint stage, for remaining capital needs, and for revenue programmes following construction of the Hub.

2.3 CURRENT POSITION

As part of the current pre-development project, BDC invited various partners to work with BDC and RLB to develop plans for the Hub, including:

- Higher/Further Education providers:
  - RNN Group (North Notts College)
  - Vision West Notts College
  - Chesterfield College
  - University of Derby
  - Nottingham Trent University
- Private education providers:
  - Elmhurst Energy
  - NAPIT
- Direct Education Business Partnership (DEBP)
- Bolsover Communities and Voluntary Service (BCVS)
- East Midlands Chamber of Commerce (EMC)

Importantly, RLB worked with partners to develop delivery concepts for the Hub itself, but also for a green skills and green business support coordination offer that would meet key BDC goals, for example, revenue-funded support to assure uptake of provision and sustainability of the Hub, address transport issues in the region, provide tailored support for those at risk of being NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) or underemployed in the region, careers engagement and coordination of local offers to increase attainment, as well as SME (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) and business engagement in EMIZ sectors and upskilling.

BDC and RLB concluded early on in discussions for the Hub that inviting education provider partners to develop Hub programmes with BDC was preferable to setting up a new entity to avoid duplicating regional provision but also to assure quality and more efficient development.

One of the risks identified at the outset of the project was the fact that asking providers to split provision and commit to develop an offer in a new location is a significant commitment. However, through the project, education provider partners have all put forward viable plans and made serious offers to deliver onsite at Shirebrook, which is a significant win for Bolsover.

As all partners have put forward considered plans, including proposals to bring in their own funding for parts of delivery or to manage all or part of the building, BDC will have the task of working with partners to narrow down these options.

As mentioned above, RLB recommends that these options are not narrowed down until they are further developed following clarification of the capital and revenue funding position from EMCCA.

In the interim, RLB has modelled a provisional activity plan and site layout based on review of proposals submitted and evidence RLB reviewed of successful skills centres/hubs across the UK.

For the physical building itself, it may be preferable to commence development soon based on current designs, pending clarification of a few issues like floor loads, etc., to create the shell of the building, as the additional fit outs and training equipment etc. will not require planning permission or significantly impact the current design. That said, clarity on funding position from EMCCA, plus extra development funding, would allow BDC to clarify those needs rapidly with partners and develop efficient phased design and fit out plans.

The RLB Sustainability team have introduced BDC colleagues to Diane McKinley, a Senior Associate at RLB who specialises in education building specification, and who also is experienced in developing construction further education curriculum and managing education capital development planning. As the project develops, there is flexible support that can be provided if desired to support BDC to translate the partner delivery programmes once further refined into a single specification and development plan for the building, ideally by autumn 2024.

2.3.1 RECENT POLICY AND FUNDING DEVELOPMENTS

Recent policy and funding developments provide support for the business case of the Hub:

- **UK Government made key announcements in June's Spending Review:**
  - Confirmed Warm Homes Retrofit spending will go ahead, including £59 million across the Midlands over three years, a major opportunity for retrofit supply chain development and skills investments
  - Confirmed commitments for new home building, which will include over 52,000 new homes for EMCCA
  - £2billion investment for EMCCA transport improvements
- **UK Government launched Skills England:**
  - Confirmed focus and investment in skills as a major theme, including focus on trades and the IS-8, which includes advanced manufacturing, clean energy, and several other sectors
  - Skills capital funding of £200 million in addition to £375 million already announced
  - Growth and Skills levy and simplification of skills system in England
  - Lifelong learning entitlement announcement
  - £1.2 billion p.a. additional skills funding by 2028
  - £100 million engineering package
  - Confirmed local business innovation investment including a £500 million fund
  - See EMCCA's response to the IS: The East Midlands is ready to capitalise on Government's Modern Industrial Strategy - East Midlands Combined County Authority
- **UK Government launched Skills England:**
  - New needs assessment and evidence base for skills across sectors

- Will help manage or provide evidence for qualifications like T Levels
- Will provide opportunities to work directly with local partners to mobilise skills solutions

- **Additional items:**
  - RLB and BDC have worked with Elmhurst Energy to agree that their Warm Homes Skills Fund submission includes the Shirebrook Hub in phase 2 of their funding request, which if successful will be a boost for EMCCA retrofit ambitions as well as support the Hub's activity.
  - RLB and BDC have received positive assessment in a National Retrofit Hub review of the recent Retrofit Skills Pilot case study review and are working to engage with the Midlands Net Zero Hub to determine if further funding is available for the Hub following the pilot.
  - Vision West Notts College and Derby College are leading a bid to create a Centre of Excellence for Construction skills that could incorporate the Shirebrook Hub as part of its offer to position the region as a leader in this skills area.
  - There is still a need to further engage employer partners for the Hub, which will be more effective if done in parallel with the selection process for the lead delivery partner and trades/sectors selected for the Hub.

EMIZ and previous green skills efforts provide momentum for BDC and EMCCA to take advantage of this increased investment. This is significant as the current public funding scenario is mixed, with funding being cut for some important initiatives, therefore it may be beneficial to assure that BDC keeps momentum with its partners for securing funding from these new sources as they progress.

3.0 DETAILED BUSINESS CASE

3.1 PROBLEM DEFINITION AND STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

Within the Interim Findings Paper (Education Provision & Employer Needs Analysis) from April 2025, RLB set out evidence for the Hub from an education provision and employer demand perspective. Building on this, RLB has confirmed the latest Office of National Statistics (ONS) and Derbyshire County Council Observatory Data for Attainment, Deprivation and other issues in Bolsover and Shirebrook.

In the Interim Findings Paper and previous work, RLB laid out the likely demand for green built environment skills and roles for the region and Bolsover, reviewed local education provision and the need for additional resource to help businesses, educators and learners navigate local offerings, as well as evidence of the rapid growth of green industries.

In **Appendix A** and **Appendix B**, RLB build on the earlier evidence to demonstrate additional challenges faced by the district, which we believe shows that funding course placements is not enough to raise attainment. Instead, we have proposed additional resources to support learners and businesses engage and remain engaged in the Hub's activity. These are described in the Delivery Model below (sections **3.5 to 3.8**).

Bolsover District, and Shirebrook and Pleasley in particular, where the Hub is located, face some of the largest challenges of any districts in England. According to ONS and statistics collected and analysed by the Derbyshire County Council Observatory in 2025, Bolsover District has:

- the highest rates of deprivation, children in poverty and free school meal eligibility of any place in Derbyshire (with Shirebrook and Pleasley the highest rates of any single ward);
- the highest fuel poverty rate in Derbyshire, with Elmton and Creswell the wards with the highest fuel poverty of any district in Derbyshire; and
- the highest percentage of adults with no degree, and adults with no qualifications in Derbyshire - Shirebrook being the ward with the highest rate.
- In Bolsover, the number of people qualifying as NEETs (those Not in Employment, Education or Training) has jumped in one year from 60 in 2023/24 to 234 in 2024/25, a 4x increase. Whether this is an unusual jump or a change in how these are counted, it highlights the urgency of action on priority groups like NEETs and for those at risk of becoming NEETs.

The data points collected by the Derbyshire Observatory are found in **Appendix B**, while the ONS labour and income statistics are analysed by RLB are in **Appendix A**. This evidence shows action is needed to support:

- **Pathways for younger people**: 16 – 25-year-olds having lower attainment, higher rates of unemployment than the rest of the UK, whereas older workers in Bolsover are more in line with national averages on employment rates.

- **Underemployment in adults:** Income data and qualifications data shows that adults in Bolsover are more likely to underemployed, paid less than counterparts in the rest of Britain and held back by a lack of qualifications and certifications.
- **Elevated NEETs and people at risk**: NEETs and being at risk of being NEETs is a serious issue in the district, with the highest rate in Derbyshire.

3.2 STRATEGIC CASE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Before outlining the Hub's value proposition, we outline the key findings that underpinned this work:

- **The green and low carbon economy is not going away**. Though it is hard to define, and like digital skills cuts across sectors, the Green Economy is growing faster than the rest of the UK economy and is a key growth and job creation opportunity.
- **Traditional trades are key to green growth**, especially in the built environment. They are not getting replaced and are one of the biggest enablers of net zero.
- **Green Skills provision must be tailored to Bolsover's needs and challenges.**
- There is a strong case for the Hub to **focus on green construction and the built environment**.
- BDC would like the Hub to be an important part of regional (EMCCA region) **system-level change**.
- The Hub should house **multiple trades in the same place** to give workers the opportunity to broaden their career pathways and improve delivery outcomes for holistic understanding of buildings.
- **SMEs, especially in building trades, need tailored support** and incentives to invest in skills.

3.2.1 THE CASE FOR GREEN SKILLS

WHAT ARE GREEN SKILLS, GREEN JOBS, AND THE GREEN ECONOMY?

Green Skills, Green Jobs, and the Green Economy are the skills, roles and economic activity that support protecting our environment and the communities that depend on it, including activity to combat and adapt to climate change and achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions.

WHY IS THE GREEN ECONOMY IMPORTANT?

The Green Economy covers multiple economic sectors, making it difficult to track, however an overall picture is emerging. RLB's analysis on Green Skills for Bolsover/East Midlands[3] from 2024 highlighted the latest evidence on the Green Economy, showing that green roles, once properly tracked, are:

- growing faster than the rest of the UK economy;
- set for growth to 2050 and beyond;

[3] *Bolsover Combined Analysis Report – Bolsover Green Skills Research – April 2024*

- a key element of inclusive economic growth plans, as well as local regional and national economic competitiveness.

Skills and workers are already lacking in some key sectors of the Green Economy.

CONCLUSIONS FROM GREEN SKILLS RESEARCH

RLB's previous work has made the following recommendations:

- Green skills and jobs should be a key focus of EMCCA and the Bolsover district, especially construction, engineering and manufacturing, logistics/transport, as well as enabling roles, especially teachers and trainers.
- A green skills service offer could offer support to businesses based on how impacted they are by net zero - core, enabling, and peripheral activity would each be supported by different skills approaches, ranging from awareness training to dedicated new qualifications.
- Employer engagement and incentivisation as well as resourced, revenue-funded coordination/collaboration are the two key elements of success for green skills provision and physical training centres that work well in case studies and engagement evidence.
- RLB recommended the development of a physical skills hub and green skills service offer, providing a purpose statement and related Theory of Change/development plan.

See below section 3.2.4, the recommended Theory of Change based on the evidence reviewed, showing the importance of resourced coordination, intelligence and business needs assessment, marketing and careers, employer engagement, and other topics.

3.2.2 MAKING GREEN SKILLS WORK FOR PLACES LIKE BOLSOVER

Bolsover and the EMCCA region are not unique in developing a green skills approach, in fact regions across the UK are racing to set up training provision and skills offers in these areas. But the region is emblematic of the challenges posed by the last energy transition, from coal to natural gas, which communities across the UK, from Wales to Scotland, are still grappling with.

Bolsover has longstanding attainment, transport, employment and other challenges, and like many other areas of the UK, its economy has simply never fully recovered from the closing of coal mining and the subsequent shrinking of manufacturing capacity.

The framing theme of green skills work thus has been - places like Bolsover should be at the front of the queue, not the back, in consideration of economic development, and stakeholders need to work together to show the business case for this.

Our approach to these issues should take advantage of the region's many workforce strengths, in areas like manufacturing and construction, while figuring out how to make green skills provision work in an area with:

- Transport issues.
- Attainment issues and higher number of NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).

- Lack of local post-16 provision; and
- Many SMEs and small traders who don't have the resource or incentives to engage in upskilling.

One of the conclusions from RLB's previous investigations is that funding courses is not enough - resourced coordination of providers, funders, employers and learners, with extensive support at each stage, is going to be essential to address these challenges and assure that communities in places like Bolsover and the EMCCA region can benefit from the green transition.

Furthermore, while it will take a lot of investment to reach net zero, every pound invested wisely with support to local communities to benefit from increased opportunities, means stakeholders can benefit from opportunities provided by this. Net zero is an urgent challenge, as is climate adaptation, but investment in this area that is set for significant growth can provide opportunities for community members to become leaders in a key growth area for the global economy.

For places like Bolsover, net zero and the green transition for the global economy means many things, but one key element is the transition away from fossil fuels towards electrification of our economy via renewable sources, especially away from natural gas heating and electricity.

3.2.3 BENEFITS OF GREEN BUILT ENVIRONMENT FOCUS

There is significant overlap between new build and retrofit in some trades. RLB through discussions with BDC and other project partners have identified the overlap between the two in terms of trade offerings, which could aid decision-making to allow BDC the flexibility to link the Hub to regional spend on both new homes and retrofit.

Firstly, green skills cover multiple economic sectors and depend on all kinds of roles, but achieving net zero will depend heavily on our ability invest in trades, especially in built environment disciplines. It's important to make people aware that green economic development is about investing in decent jobs for everyone and upskilling existing workers where needed - it is not about replacing these jobs. RLB's work showed that green skills and roles in most cases aren't replacing traditional trades and professions but will depend on the pipeline of new workers in sectors like plumbing, electricians, construction, engineering and other disciplines

The work highlighted how construction is a key priority area and strength area for the EMCCA region, with 39% of emissions linked in some ways to buildings[4], and with 29 million homes needing low carbon retrofit by 2050 in order for us to meet UK net zero commitments[5]. The report also highlighted the key areas of manufacturing, transport and logistics as well as enabling roles, especially the need for focus on teachers and training, engineering, green skills in professional and business roles, and the public sector.

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[4] Embodied Carbon - World Green Building Council
[5] Retrofitting homes for net zero

RLB and BDC also developed a needs assessment and analysis of the retrofit workforce needs[6], assessing the 12 or more disciplines and trades that are involved in each building retrofit and helping understand what the job demand would be for each trade for each home delivered. We demonstrated that delivery across the East Midlands would require 11,000 workers per year if aligned to net zero, with Bolsover needing 200 workers per year.

This method showed the notional impact on demand for each individual role in retrofit, from cost managers to scaffolding. It provided the evidence for focus on traditional trades, where a lot of focus to date has been on the official retrofit assessor and coordination roles. Crucially, most of these disciplines are directly relevant for new build construction equally to retrofit.

3.2.4 NEED FOR SYSTEM LEVEL APPROACH

RLB with BDC have mapped the present Green Skills Hub proposal against the target areas of EMIZ, covering several aspects of the Sustainable and Green Construction theme. BDC with other partners' support, are hopeful to develop programmes that complement other EMIZ efforts and have strong links to EMCCA-wide initiatives, for example the EMIZ Strand B Green Construction strategy led by Nottingham Trent University (NTU).

[6] *Bolsover and East Midlands Green Skills Retrofit Skills Analysis and Roadmap – February 2024*

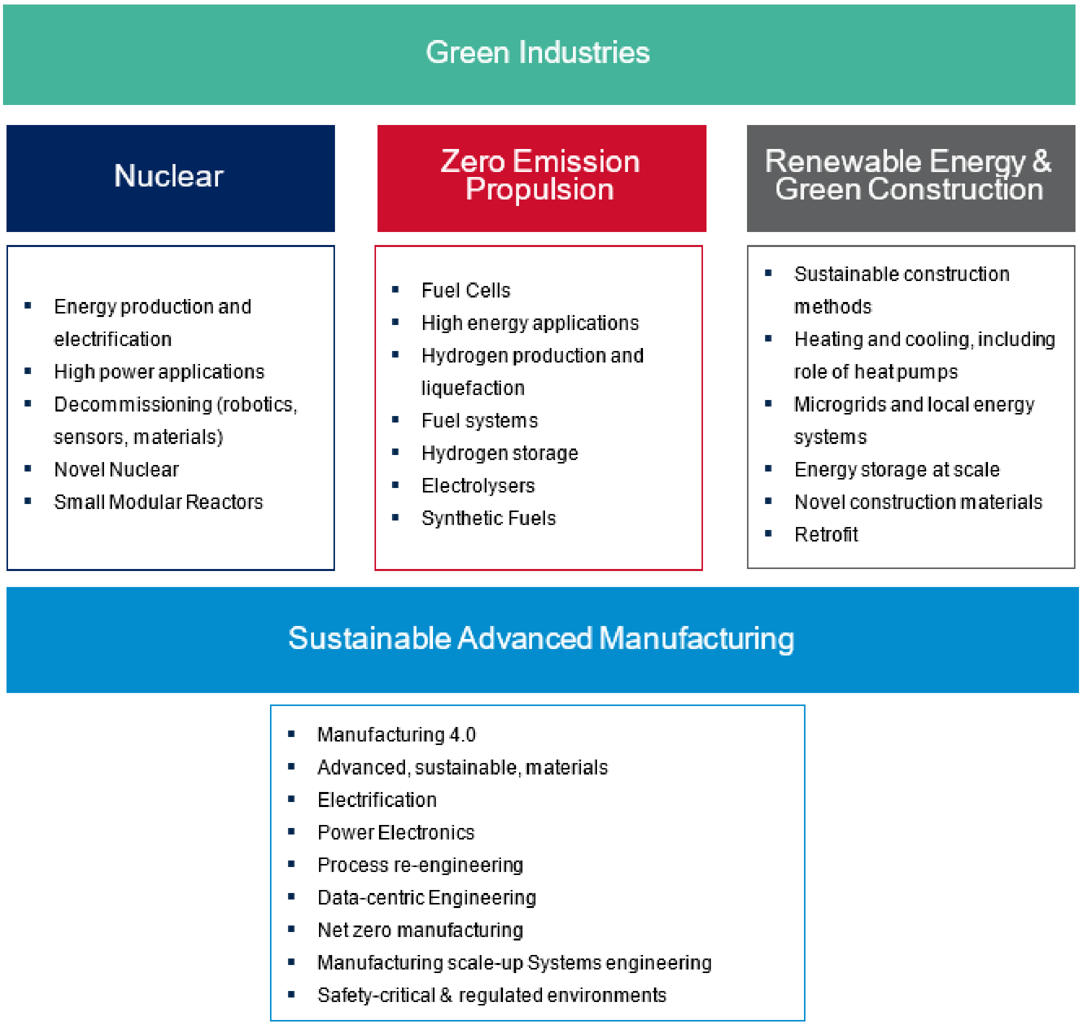

Figure 2 - EMCCA, Summary of EMIZ Green Industries and Advanced Manufacturing sectors and disciplines

We have assessed regional offers and worked to design complementary provision that does not clash or recreate offers that are available close by, but fills gaps in provision, including in Bench Trade built environment workshops as well as building insultation training, two areas identified as gaps in recent engagement with partners as well as reflected in recent collaborative research between BDC, RLB and Nottingham Trent University through the DESNZ Regional Retrofit Skills Pilot.

In summary, there are some clear themes around flexibility in training provision, complementing existing provision in the region, and a joint-up collaborative approach between education partners, but one that requires a **centralised Green Skills Coordinator role based out of the Hub**, which we will develop further but propose may sit best at an EMCCA-wide level. This will complement local tailored support we propose to make local provision work in deprived areas like Shirebrook.

MCS FOUNDATION LOCAL AREA RETROFIT ACCELERATOR (LARA)

BDC is leading an effort with Derbyshire County Council and Nottinghamshire County Council and the MCS Foundation to develop a regional strategy for EMCCA retrofit improvement.

This strategy has further progressed and developed a set of goals for a regional retrofit action plan. BDC is working to map it's plans to this regional strategy, including Goal 4: to ensure we have the right capacity and capabilities for high quality retrofit delivery.

- RLB has confirmed through engagement that there may be pilot or other funding available to deliver the strategy.
- RLB is working with BDC to map the current Green Skills Hub project to the goals of the MCS to help unlock additional funding.

The Hub in Shirebrook has been earmarked as the regional Retrofit Skills Hub in the MCS LARA action plan for the EMCCA region, which is highly positive. Launching the Green Skills Hub at Shirebrook could provide a significant boost to the LARA strategy delivery and there is also potential for pilot funding from MCS Foundation which is being explored.

BDC'S WIDER AMBITIONS ON GREEN SKILLS

Finally, the Green Skills Hub at Shirebrook is a component of Bolsover's wider vision for supporting a region wide Green Skills offer in partnership with local authorities, EMCCA, employers, providers and communities.

These themes, activities and outcomes are described in this reports' sections below, and BDC aims for the Hub to contribute to several of these, as well as to feed into the development of EMCCA's broader plans.

The image below visualises the Theory of Change from BDC and RLB's Green Skills Analysis Report for Bolsover and the East Midlands from 2024[7]:

[7] *Bolsover Combined Analysis Report – Bolsover Green Skills Research – April 2024*

Bolsover and East Midlands Green Skills Hub Offer	Business Case for Action	Activities	Outcomes
Resourced Collaboration and Flexible Workforce Funding	Bolsover and places like it require a local and / or regional resource to link all stakeholders to inform course planning and ensure pipelines of learners and roles.	Permanent resource to coordinate local green skills between businesses, educators, learners and workers	Increase uptake in regional offers to build local capacity and meet future local workforce demand.
Regional Intelligence and Demand	Employers unaware of available provision, providers don't have enough market contact for adequate provision design and planning.	Surveys, engagements and intell to link skills planning with real local workforce demand	Ensure retrofit and built environment course routes are informed by real local market demands and meet real local employer needs.
Marketing and Young People	Many stakeholders require awareness raising and engagement. Getting young people engaged to join future workforce is a significant priority.	Create and maintain approach for engaging regional young people, workers and businesses in green career and business pathways	Measurable increase in workers, businesses and young people engageming in green careers.
Employer Engagement	Permanent employer involvement is a key determinant of success of skills hubs—different levels of employer involvement must be coordinated.	Maintain links to regional employers to link with job seekers and help design green course offers	More employer involvement will increase engagement from young people and workers, increases uptake in courses, and bring a range of other positive outcomes.
Funding and Business case development	Regional stakeholders lack time to engage with or benefit from the local, regional, and national initiatives and funding opportunities.	Also support partner funding applications and business case development for green economy	Increase East Midlands' capacity to engage and benefit from opportunities for skills funding and building more sector workstreams.
Link Green skills to Regional Decarbonisation	Green skills development is tied to demand for net zero, and should align with region net zero planning.	Identify main public and private decarbonisation efforts, and support skills plan and aggregate the skills outcomes for each	Ensure net zero delivery supports a globally competitive, inclusive local and regional workforce
Bolsover / East Midlands Green Skills Hub	Bolsover, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and wider East Midlands could benefit from a permanent physical hub for the previously mentioned activities and course provision.	Create a full business case for permanent service based on pilot findings, including detailed business case for a physical hub. Identify funding for a future hub.	Design a Bolsover East Midlands Green skills hub that has defined scope and activities and several permanent sector workstreams.

3.2.5 HOLISTIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT TRAINING AND IMPROVING OUTCOMES

One of the main identified needs in discussions to date is helping SMEs and workers develop a more holistic understanding of new build construction processes and retrofit - giving trades people more exposure to the management processes like retrofit assessment, but also giving coordinators and assessors more exposure to the technical delivery of trades. This is needed to improve the outcomes and quality of delivery, but it also encourages businesses to be more flexible in expanding their service offer and skills. For this reason, we have proposed ensuring that multiple new build and retrofit trades train together in the same large, open space where possible to give people a wider view of different career paths in the built environment. This will also improve delivery by helping learners understand how their profession fits with others, building their knowledge of design, building physics, construction management. They would also have the opportunity to engage directly with a range of employers from across relevant industries.

3.2.6 MAKING SKILLS OFFERS WORK FOR SMES AND ENGAGING LOCAL BUSINESS IN LOCAL DELIVERY

SMEs are repeatedly noting the difficulty in engaging in skills investments, particularly in supporting work experience or apprenticeships. One task from all engaged project partners, especially led by the East Midlands Chamber (EMC), will be to identify employer incentives and barriers to skills engagement, and work those into the Hub's business case, covering:

- Incentives for SMEs and businesses;
- Navigating local provision offer for businesses and learners;
- Tailored support;
- Venue for engagement.

PROCUREMENT ACCESS AND PIPELINE OF WORK

Initial investigations have shown that demonstrating a real pipeline for employers is the central to approach incentivizing employers to participate.

Reconvening the Local Authority Retrofit Forum for collective market engagement with SMEs is one activity the Hub could coordinate.

Another is to take the best practice in procurement social value and planning condition efforts, like Chesterfield Council's approach to planning condition skills support, which can be adopted more widely – this is something the Hub could focus on to incentivize more businesses to work with the Hub and its partners on skills.

Finally, the Warm Homes Fund coordinated by the Midlands Net Zero Hub will deliver £144 million across 60 authorities over 3 years, the biggest investment in retrofit we have identified to date. This provides the most significant opportunity yet for Hub to play a role in coordinating skills elements of market engagement and even supporting local SMEs to genuinely benefit from this investment - navigating skills investments like Trustmark, PAS 2035, and/or MCS certifications.

Below is a summary of the Warm Homes Fund:

- **Warm Homes: Local Grant:**
  - National funding available - £500mn across 3 years
  - 48 Local Authorities within the consortia (25 projects)
  - Midlands Net Zero Hub awarded £69mn
  - Target to deliver ~4,000 homes

- **Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund:**
  - National funding available - £1.2bn across 3 years
  - 30 consortium members
  - Midlands Net Zero Hub awarded £75.8mn (£157mn with co-funding)
  - Target to deliver ~8,700 homes

PIPELINE FROM WARM HOMES FUND AND DEMAND IMPACT ASSESSMENT VS RETROFIT LABOUR DEMAND

RLB has analysed the Warm Homes Spend and estimated over 5,000 jobs in retrofit will be created with this investment, across the following disciplines. This is a powerful example of the increase in demand for direct job demand (not gross value added or indirect job impact) that we might see from the Warm Homes spend:

Table 1 - Retrofit Relevant Occupations vs jobs demand

Retrofit Relevant Occupations from SIC Codes 41, 42, 43 and others	3-year job demand	Per year demand forecast
Construction Project Managers	169	56
Construction trades supervisors	422	141
Wood trades and interior fit-out	84	28
Building envelope specialists	21	7
Plasterers	42	14
Roofers	338	113
Glaziers	338	113

Specialist building operators	1,013	338
Scaffolders	971	324
Electrical trades	1,013	338
Plumbing and HVAC	169	56
Other construction professionals and technical staff	169	56
Architects	63	21
Surveyors	84	28
Admin, Contingency	528	176
TOTAL	**5,426**	**1,809**

Further work with the Midlands Net Zero Hub will allow RLB to drill down into the EMCCA and Bolsover region for demand information that will support the Hub's business case. Much of this labour will come from outside the EMCCA and Midlands region unless there is an EMCCA-wide effort to support the required SME engagement and upskilling. BDC hopes this hub will be a key part of this effort.

As noted above, the overlap between retrofit of existing buildings and building new ones is significant in terms of trades, so the Hub will not only support the Warm Homes ambitions but also the mayor's recent announcement of building 52,000 new homes in the EMCCA region[8].

INCENTIVES FOR SMES TO WORK WITH LEARNERS

Another issue that we have investigated with partners is barriers to SMEs engaging with learners. For example, BDC has been working with RLB, DEBP and education partners like Vision West Notts College to develop a pilot for retrofit-focussed work experience opportunities for local college students, with the aim of:

- Making it easier for retrofit employers, especially SMEs, to engage in work experience by rotating placements between retrofit employers for shorter periods of time, supported throughout by BDC as the retrofit client and lead work experience sponsor.

[8] EMCCA, May, 2025, One region, one voice: Mayor Claire Ward launches the region's vision for UKREiiF - East Midlands Combined County Authority

- Developing a domestic retrofit focused work experience pathway for students, especially new Building Services T-Levels students in local colleges like Vision West Notts College, Chesterfield College and North Notts College (RNN Group).

This work has been made possible by funding from the Midlands Net Zero Hub and DESNZ as part of the East Midlands Regional Retrofit Skills Pilot project which was led by BDC in 2024.

3.3 PROPOSED ACTIVITIES, REPORTABLE OUTPUTS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Based on findings from RLB's work and the proposals from partners to achieve EMIZ and BDC ambitions, the following illustrative activities are proposed and considered along with their reportable outputs and the link to EMCCA's Inclusive Growth framework which is in development.

While some providers have provided initial output numbers (e.g., no. of learners per year) in **Appendix D**, these will be aggregated once confirmed with partners and EMCCA into agreed target outputs. These activities and others are subject to confirmation and change in a refined combined plan which BDC hopes to develop after the current EMIZ 'sprint stage.

Table 2 - Summary of outcomes, reportable outputs, and required resource for the Hub's proposed activities

Activity	Category	Delivery Partner	Delivery Phase	Inclusive Growth Outcome Supported	Reportable Outputs	Resource to deliver
Locally based support for those at risk of being NEETs or local priority cohorts	Green Skills Hub Support	Hub staff	Phase 1 (from late 2026/early 2027)	Better matching the supply of people from the **skills** system to the needs of employers Reducing the inequalities within our region that distort too many people's social mobility Having a **healthier**, more work-ready population	# engaged # of target starts # of target group completions # support actions delivered Reduction in # NEETs	Hub cohort support staff, EMCCA funding

Activity	Category	Delivery Partner	Delivery Phase	Inclusive Growth Outcome Supported	Reportable Outputs	Resource to deliver
Secondary school engagement and 14-16 NVQ taster courses, careers officer and teacher training	Green Skills Hub Support	Hub staff or pilot of EMCCA wide resource	Phase 1 (from late 2026/early 2027)	Better matching the supply of people from the **skills** system to the needs of employers	# engaged on site # courses taken up # employer / career sessions	Green Careers Engagement Coordinator
Support SMEs to navigate local training offer or access local pipeline opportunities	Green Skills Hub Support	Hub staff or pilot of EMCCA-wide resource, sessions held at hub	Phase 1 or 2 (2027 or 2028)	Growing our **economy** faster Increasing the pace of our economy's journey to Net Zero Building the new homes our residents need in the right places and to the right standards	# SMEs engaged # SMEs accessing local pipeline # SME CPD, certifications or procurements # SMEs engaged with EMCCA Warm Homes delivery or new homes procurement	Employer Support Coordinator, or University of Derby Staff (Climate Business Support HE is funding)

Activity	Category	Delivery Partner	Delivery Phase	Inclusive Growth Outcome Supported	Reportable Outputs	Resource to deliver
14-16 Lvl 1 and 2 provision	Core Provision	College/FE	Phase 1 (from late 2026/early 2027)	Increasing the pace of our economy's journey to **Net Zero** Better matching the supply of people from the skills system to the needs of employers Creating more, better paid **job opportunities**	# of placements started # of placements completed	College
16 – 25 yr old Lvl 2 and 3 provision		College/FE	Phase 1 (from late 2026/early 2027)	Increasing the pace of our economy's journey to **Net Zero** Better matching the supply of people from the skills system to the needs of employers Creating more, better paid **job opportunities**	# of placements started # of placements completed	College
Adult Education Short Course Certification		Elmhurst, NAPIT private providers, and/or HE partners	Phase 1 (from late 2026/early 2027)	Better matching the supply of people from the **skills** system to the needs of employers Creating more, better paid **job opportunities** Increasing the pace of our economy's journey to **Net Zero**	# of certification delivered # of pre-requisites for local procurement attained	NAPIT, Elmhurst and HE partners

Activity	Category	Delivery Partner	Delivery Phase	Inclusive Growth Outcome Supported	Reportable Outputs	Resource to deliver
CPD and Taster sessions and courses for Lvl 3 and 4 courses in region, adults and secondary		NTU	Phase 2 (late 2027 or early 2028)	Better matching the supply of people from the **skills** system to the needs of employers Reducing the inequalities within our region that distort too many people's social mobility	# of CPD hours delivered # of courses referred or enrolled	HE and FE Partners, Green Careers Coordinator
HE Research and support for improving built environment outcomes		NTU, UoD, Elmhurst		Growing our **economy** faster Increasing the pace of our economy's journey to **Net Zero**	# of tech solutions adopted # of certification pursued £ of local pipeline work won # of procurements supported	Employer Support Coordinator or NTU
Please note, these and other activities are to be confirmed						

3.4 BUSINESS CASE OPTIONS

3.4.1 BOLSOVER GREEN SKILLS HUB VALUE PROPOSITION VS. "DO NOTHING" OPTION FOR THE SHIREBROOK HUB

BDC and RLB are proposing an innovative skills centre that fills gaps in regional built environment provision, which will form an important component of the EMIZ strategy, EMCCA Inclusive Growth Plans (Commission), as well as the MCS Foundation Funded EMCCA Local Area Retrofit Strategy. It will also form an essential part of the district's ambitions to improve attainment and outcomes for communities in the district, including Shirebrook, one of the most deprived areas in Derbyshire.

Having secured Regeneration Funding and EMIZ funding from EMCCA to develop BDC's plans off the back of several years of development on green skills provision with a range of partners, BDC is committed to leveraging its investment of ca. £2 million in capital funding to support EMIZ goals.

In line with the risks considered in this paper, BDC does have the option to build the shell and lease this to a business instead of embarking on the Green Skills Hub idea.

While BDC is developing these plans with some uncertainty about funding for full development, fit out and revenue, the benefits of assuring that one of the most deprived regions in EMCCA is an important part of EMCCA's innovation plans, outweighs the potentially lower risk or lower effort option to simply lease the shell of the building to a company for business purposes. This "do nothing" or "business as usual" option will not support BDC in its ambitions to improve attainment in the region or bring the benefits of green economic growth to the community in the form of skills and career opportunities.

Further options appraisal for business case decisions may be required at the next stage against a refined combined partner activity proposal.

3.5 DELIVERY MODEL

3.5.1 FINDINGS

FOCUS ON GREEN BUILT ENVIRONMENT: NEW BUILDS AND RETROFIT

BDC and RLB are proposing a physical skills hub that focuses on green built environment skills, which are not only skills required to achieve net zero, but they are also in areas where there are already separate workforce shortages and high demand, and offer strong, well paid career pathways.

Most partners agree the physical hub should focus on the green built environment initially, through multiple trades and disciplines that support low carbon building retrofit, from plumbing, insulation, electricians, bench trades, building management, surveying, design, etc., which also overlap significantly with trades for new builds. However, the concept and space can be upscaled to engage local people in other EMIZ target sectors, and partners have already proposed additional offerings that could be coordinated from the Hub but delivered at different locations, as outlined in **Appendix D**.

Given the level of investment forthcoming in Midlands and EMCCA region for new homes and retrofit (see section **2.3.1**), there is significant opportunity to leverage the spending for local job creation and business skills investment, including SME engagement. The timing of the Hub creation as these built environment investments are coming on-line is a great opportunity and reflected by most of the plans.

FURTHER EDUCATION (FE) COLLEGE WILL BE LEAD PARTNER FOR COLLABORATIVE HUB

There are many options to consider, but there is a strong argument to have a further education college as a lead partner, and perhaps to take on management of the building, for the following reasons:

- FE has a stronger remit in target areas like 14- to 16-year-olds, 16- to 25- year-olds and adults;
- FE has more ability to generate their own funding streams and develop sustainable programmes;
- FE has experience managing security and safeguarding rules for young people in building management, a responsibility other partners may not be able to take responsibility for; and
- There is a high demand for the FE provision in this area, with no current post-16 provision based in the Bolsover District

This said, it is highly beneficial to have strong partnerships and some onsite delivery with universities and open university pathways to local residents. At the same time, private providers like Elmhurst Energy and NAPIT can deliver flexible short courses to adults and businesses against leading certifications in ways that complement other provision very well. All of these partners working together can share this large space, managed by a lead FE partner or partners, with a range of activities that meet identified needs, but also help keep the Hub sustainable and vibrant.

REVENUE FUNDED HUB SUPPORT OFFER FOR PRIORITY GROUPS AND ENGAGE SMES

Bolsover District has highest percentage of adults 16 to 64 without Qualification of any kind in all of Derbyshire, and evidence of underemployment and lower pay than the average for Derbyshire or Great Britain as a whole. Adult education short certifications as well as taster courses for flexible adult learning from partners like NTU can help address this problem.

At the same time, the number of Universal Benefit claimants under 25, the number of NEETs, and the number of people under 25 who are under-qualified in Bolsover and Shirebrook in particular is the highest in Derbyshire, or near the highest. The provision led by FE colleges targeting 14- to 16- year-olds as well as provision for 16- to 25-year-olds in a District with no post-16 provision will fill a major gap. The fact that it will be supported by dedicated support resource to get people engaged and work to retain them through to qualifications will provide a model that Chesterfield College is already piloting at their Staveley site, and BDC hope to demonstrate and upscale this at Shirebrook.

MEETING REGIONAL PROVISION NEEDS AND MINIMISING FIT OUT COSTS

The Hub's current building design is an empty warehouse divided into two halves, roughly 451 m^2 each side, and eight metres high. There are capital needs for further fit out, equipment and other transport facilitation requests including minibuses.

However, there is significant classroom capacity already at FE colleges. The education provider partners have focussed on the potential provided by open space and eight metre high ceilings that could provide opportunities for meeting provision needs that cannot be met elsewhere, either with unique training equipment or allowing for flexible use of space, for example at the BE-ST Centre in Scotland (**Figure 4Error! Reference source not found.**) or the Energy House in Salford (**Figure 3**), which creates a model home in a warehouse where many different trade disciplines can build their skills in a real environment:

Figure 3 - Energy House, University of Salford. The new-build 'homes' where energy scientists play God with the weather The Guardian

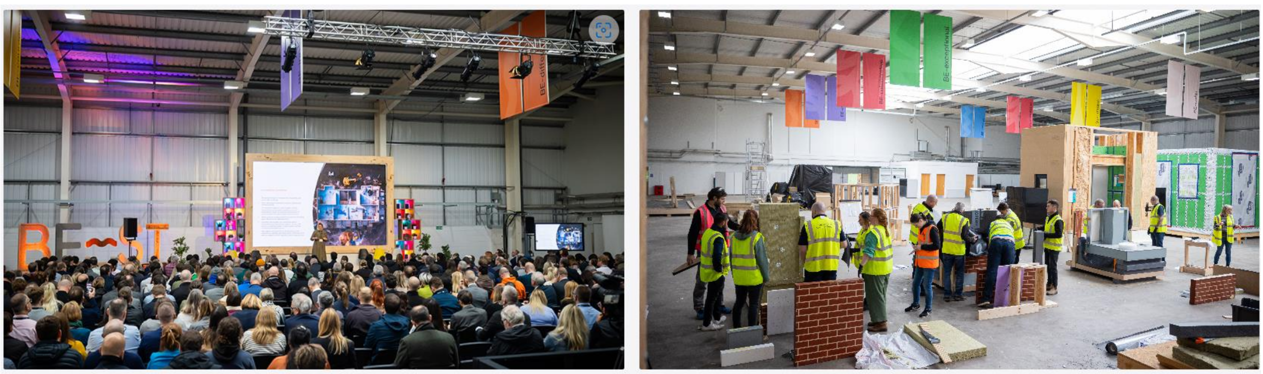

Figure 4 - BE-ST National Retrofit Centre. National Retrofit Centre - BE-ST

In **Appendix D**, RLB provide a further review and summary options for the physical building and Hub based on proposals received by partners during the sprint phase. Once BDC and RLB have clarity on funding scenarios from EMCCA, these options will be refined with input of partners and assessed more formally, as well as matched with specifications. Summaries of partner proposals in **Appendix D** include descriptions, course offerings and activities, and building need and equipment information.

Some, not all partners provided estimated cost breakdowns associated with suggest building layout and equipment, and pre-development (pore-commencement) costs.

3.6 DELIVERY MODEL PLAN AND TIMELINE

RLB has developed a proposed timeline for the EMIZ Green Skills Hub Delivery Plan (**Figure 5**), divided into Strategic Development, Construction and Handover, then following the Hub's launch end 2026/early 2027, Phase 1 and Phase 2 in 2028.

The plan covers the strategic planning, delivery of the physical building and fit out, as well as education provision and Hub operation. This plan may be subject to refinement and will have regard to EMCCA reporting responsibilities and project outputs as agreed with EMCCA.

Phase 3 will be confirmed post-hub launch in agreement with EMCCA to plan for the post-EMIZ period.

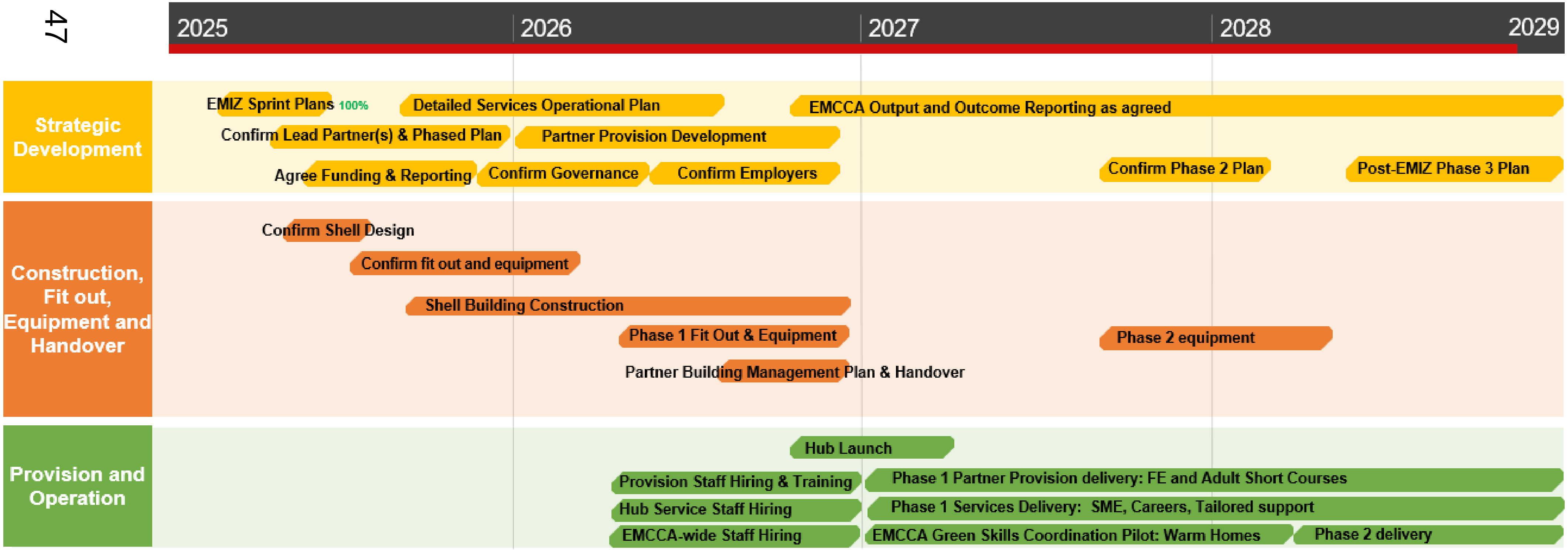

Figure 5 - Proposed Green Skills Hub Delivery Timeline

3.7 DELIVERY MODEL ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Figure 6 below shows a proposed structure of the Hub's operational model. The core provision delivery will be led by FE college partner or partners, who will also manage the building. They will also launch (as part of Phase 1) from 2027, short certification courses for adults as well as the Green Skills Hub Service Offer support. Higher Education activity and employer involvement will increase in Phase 2 from 2028, if not before.

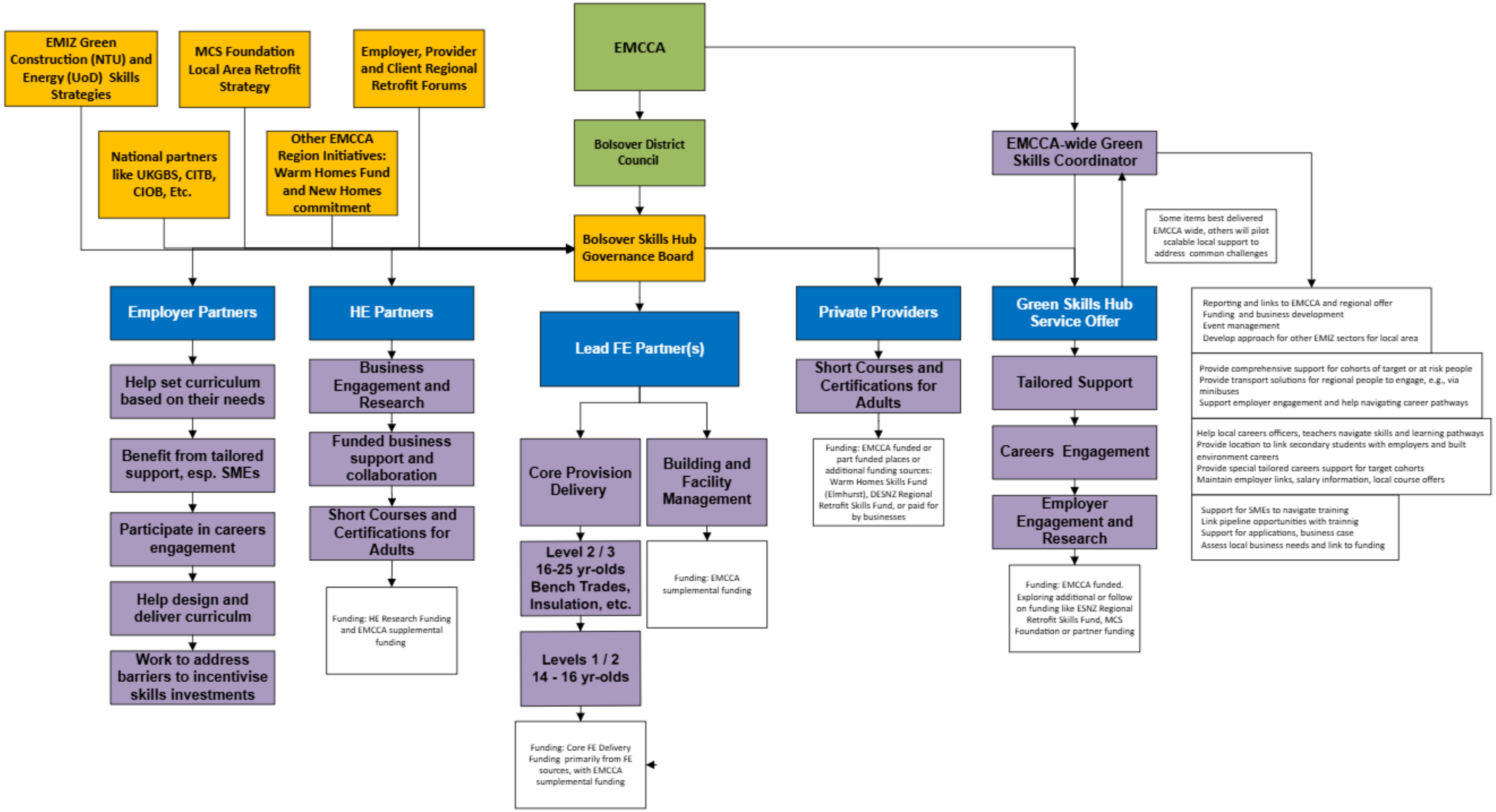

Figure 6 - Proposed Operational Model for the Green Skills

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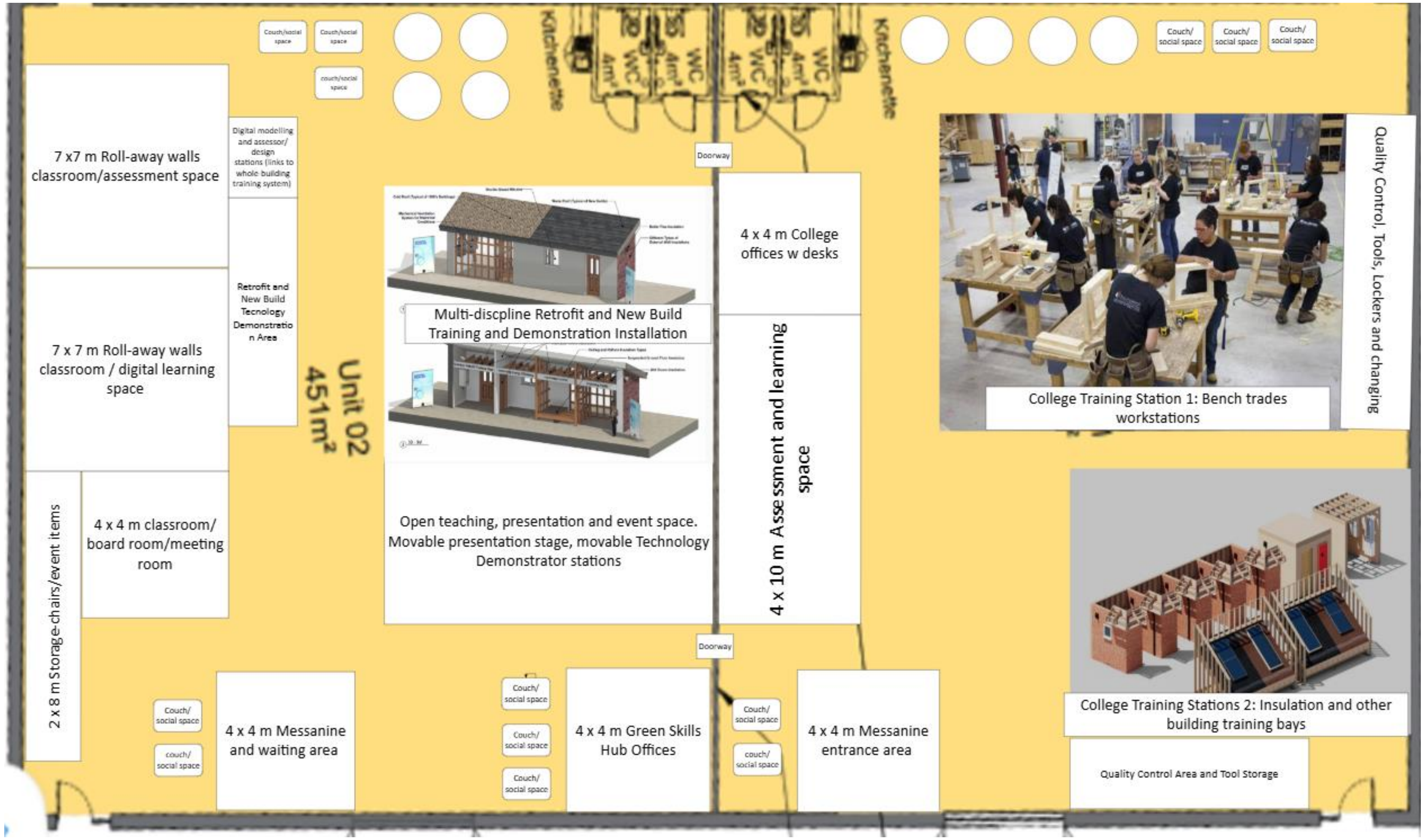
3.8 DELIVERY MODEL HUB PROVISION CONCEPT

RLB has amalgamated the key elements of all partners' proposals to suggest an illustrative concept of joint delivery between FE, HE and private partners on the site, with workshop trade training on one side led by colleges, with innovative class, event and technology demonstration space on the other. This multiuse space could have a range of shared uses, from careers engagement to adult education training, SME support services and far beyond.



3.9 PRELIMINARY RISK ASSESSMENT

Table 3 - Preliminary risk assessment - Green Skills Hub delivery and operation

Risk	Description	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation
Need to confirm and further develop plan	BDC EMIZ partners have put forward credible plans to for sustainable delivery, but further development is needed			More development funding has been requested to allow plan to be pulled through to operation and handover.
Delay in building specification or construction	Partners need to discuss what funding is available to be able to understand what specification is possible. Delays could delay launch of the Hub.			Have highlighted need for clarity of funding to be able to confirm plans and finalise specifications and plan fit out. Partners have identified building needs so this can be specified quickly on confirmation. Requested and also identifying funding for ongoing development.
Inadequate fit out funding	BDC has put forward significant resources to dedicate the building to EMIZ regional strategy and covered the main capital costs of £2million. However, if there is no fit out or equipment funding, the building cannot reach its potential as a skills centre.			Open plan and minimal fit out are a strength of the plans—all partners want to leverage open space. But sustainable provision requires fit out investment and equipment for training beyond the £2million that BDC has leveraged itself for the building shell.
Inadequate revenue and support funding	BDC has well established challenges in education engagement, mobility. Additionally, construction SME market it also difficult to sustain engagement with. Without revenue resource to			While partners, especially FE partners, can develop and secure their own funding for core provision, to make the Hub work in a place like Bolsover, our evidence and engagement has shown that tailored local support as well as engagement with EMCCA-wide coordination is

Risk	Description	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation
	complement the core provision and get people through the door and keep them engaged, the centre is at risk of being unsustainable due to the high rate of local deprivation, lack of attainment, poor transport links and other challenges.			required to keep stakeholders engaged sustainably.
Regional engagement and links	Getting learners and especially businesses to engage with the Hub will depend in part with the level of integration with the rest of EMIZ and other EMCCA regional efforts, like leveraging upcoming EMCCA retrofit and new homes spend to incentivise SMEs to engage.			All partners have focused on deliverability and filling gaps in current provision for sustainable offer at the Hub. We will request revenue funded support to engage locally get and keep learners engaged in programmes. Support for example includes suggestions for minibus and other transport support.
Employer engagement	Our findings show training centres are only sustainable with employer engagement. Building trades are dominated by SMEs which need incentives to engage.			Business engagement resource is one of the key requests of EMCCA to assure sustainability of the centre. We are also working to secure larger and smaller employer commitments prior to construction.
Learner Engagement	Engaging and retaining learner engagement, whether young people or adults, is a challenge in locations like Shirebrook.			Dedicated resource to complement FE led provision and to provide tailored support, including transport support, to target groups is key to BDC's proposal.

3.10 COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Table 4 - Estimated cost ranges for further development of the Green Skills Hub

Item	Type	Est. Cost Range	Proposed Funding Source
Further Development work to confirm detailed solution	Development	Minimum £107,000	EMCCA as per EMIZ EOI request from BDC. BDC exploring additional for short term solution.
Fit out – classrooms, furniture, mezzanines, offices, lighting, screens and IT, event stage, roll-away classrooms, etc.	Capital	£500,000 to £1,000,000+	EMCCA as per EMIZ application
Training Equipment – work benches, building training bays, technology demonstration stations, multi-discipline building training asset	Capital	£200,000 to £750,000	EMCCA as per EMIZ application, will seek donations of equipment from partners
Transport – two 12 to 16 seat mini-buses	Capital	2 new electric minibuses £120,000 (£60k each) OR 2 used minibuses £50,000 (ca £25,000 each)	EMCCA as per EMIZ application
Service support officers – Employer, Careers, and Tailored Support Officer (at risk of NEETs and priority groups)	Operational	Ca. £180,000 p.a. for ca. 3 roles	EMCCA as per EMIZ application, will also query Midlands Net Zero Hub and MCS Foundation for part
College Hub Manager and Tutors	Operational	TBC	TBC
EMCCA -wide Green Skills Coordinator	EMCCA (outside hub)	£60,000 p.a.	EMCCA or MCS Foundation
Climate Business Support	Operational	Ca. £60,000 p.a.	University of Derby
Utilities	Operational	£10,000 to £15,000 p.a.	EMCCA as per EMIZ application
Insurance	Operational	£2000 to £5000 p.a.	EMCCA as per EMIZ application
Maintenance and grounds maintenance	Operational	£5,000 to £10,000 p.a.	EMCCA as per EMIZ application

Most of BDC's partners as part of their individual Hub Engagement Plans provided some cost information, but these are only approximate estimates until the final mix of partners and Phase 1 activities is confirmed.

RLB has made a high-level estimate of operational and capital costs (**Table 4** above). These costs are illustrative only but can be confirmed and aggregated through further discussions with EMCCA colleagues and confirmation from partners.

3.11 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The development of the business case reflects input from a range of partners, including analysis and input from key partners on the topic of business engagement, community engagement and inclusion, and careers and engagement with young people. RLB also engaged with Nottingham College to understand the parameters for a potential EMCCA-wide coordination offer that would work with the Hub at Shirebrook and related facilities to help coordinate with businesses and each other to increase uptake with existing offers in the region. This input is summarised below and has informed the business case.

3.11.1 BUSINESS SUPPORT APPROACH

RLB's research into skills offers by local authorities and physical skills centres found that employer involvement was the key to success. The East Midlands Chamber (EMC) is led the initial investigation of employer partners for the Hub, but also the identification of incentives for different employers to participate.

In addition to skills, business support services could be a key activity of the Hub - this could introduce SMEs to main contractors, help them navigate procurement frameworks or retrofit standards, help them understand the business case for new technology adoption or training investment, among other services.

The Retrofit Employer Forum convened by the EMC will also be linked to the delivery of the Hub and can be explored as an EMCCA-wide lever for engaging the retrofit market and education providers with local authorities ahead of Warm Homes funding launch.

BDC with RLB's support, will work with partners like EMC to secure official employer partnerships for the Hub following confirmation of the mix of trades and disciplines that will occupy the site.

3.11.2 BCVS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Bolsover Communities and Voluntary Service (BCVS) has led on community consultation discussions about the Hub. While finding broad support for a green skills hub, they have refined their responses and evidence into a range of asks and proposals for the Hub that require further development with all partners:

- In addition to green skills, formal and technical qualifications, there is a need to incorporate provision of soft skills, numeracy, literacy, life skills and basic IT or data management skills, especially if there is a focus on NEETs or other target groups. This would also be useful for older learners who have missed out on these elements.
- Having access for local businesses and charities to meet and facilitate shared provision would be welcomed to support marginalised groups.
- Proposals for "joined up" offers leveraging the Hub as key component for multiple interventions and support for NEETS or those with long term conditions.

- Suggestion that the Green Skills Coordinator resources support activity beyond construction and beyond the physical hub, including work with the local Wildlife Trust on forestry training, areas like repair and landscape/horticulture. Finding a way to incorporate the voluntary sector would also bring significant benefits.

BCVS has also put forward a proposal for electric minibuses to be an important part of the Hub, which would allow transport support for cohorts of people and increase the uptake and accessibility of training to people with transportation or attainment challenges, an example of the tailored, local support that the Hub could offer to better engage target groups in positive career pathways and skills training.

3.11.3 CAREERS ENGAGEMENT AND DEBP SECONDARY SKILLS STRATEGY

Direct Education Business Partnership (DEBP), a careers development-based charity, is led the development of a careers approach for the Hub, that builds upon previous work led by RLB and DEBP - developing green skills materials for careers professionals and teachers. DEBP's intention is to create sector specific careers materials and engage employers to co-deliver engagement sessions for young people and help people understand career paths and related education routes locally, including onsite at Shirebrook.

This careers approach is important to engage employers within Bolsover and regional communities. It will also be a part of the strategy for working with employers to find solutions and messages that support those furthest away from work or education.

One of the major opportunities of the Hub is to increase attainment in Bolsover and the region with a proactive approach to careers coordination, engagement with businesses, and targeting pre-16-year-olds, teachers and careers offers to help them navigate regional green skills offers, understand green careers, work with employers, and get a head start on their career pathways.

DEBP has developed a strategy for the Hub, identifying evidence for a gap in provision and support for 14- to 16-year-olds, and reviewing programs like Fusion Learning and Raising Aspirations, methods of engaging cohorts of these groups with tailored support and careers/employer opportunities. They have made the following suggestions for the Hub and coordination offer based on their analysis and strategy[9]:

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[9] *DEBP, The Green Skills Hub & Secondary Education: Securing a Talent Pipeline, 2025, EMIZ report for BDC.*

Key requests. A Green Skills Hub that enhances secondary education and is aspirational and motivational for a range of learners:

- *High-quality Alternative Provision (AP) offer to motivate and re-engage learners with their educational journey.*
- *Taster activities for post-16 pathways exploration – broaden learner understanding around green careers at FE and HE.*
- *Curriculum offer of a L2 equivalent vocational programme of study.*
- *Engagement strategy that commences in the development and build phase, including careers fayres, careers materials, CPD events for educators, and parent/carer engagement events.*
- *Opportunities for young people to connect with employers associated with the Hub (hub and spoke model) to better understand 'green' careers.*

3.11.4 EMCCA-LEVEL GREEN SKILLS COORDINATION

Partners at Nottingham College have focused on the coordination offer rather than physical delivery at the Hub. They have developed a review of regional initiatives and made suggestions for Hub and wider coordination governance and approach. Included in this is a refinement of target areas that would benefit from local coordination, signposting, support for funding applications, joint employer engagement, and higher ambition and support for target groups to engage as part of a regional green skills offer:

COORDINATING LOCAL PROVISION

Local economic strategies and plans, along with primary research carried out by local partners, identify the need for the following areas of curriculum development from entry levels to higher technical skills in specific areas related to EMIZ priority topics:

- Climate literacy integration embedding green awareness across all existing programmes.
- Basic insulation installation.
- Solar panel installation.
- Environmental awareness covering waste management fundamentals.
- Building Information Modelling (BIM) for green construction.
- Heat pump installation and maintenance.
- Wind turbine technician training.
- Retrofit training (PAS 2035 certification) for retrofit assessor and coordinator pathways.
- Energy efficiency technician training.
- Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) incorporating offsite manufacturing and assembly.
- Battery manufacturing technician skills.
- Green project management with sustainability focus.
- Fuel cell technology fundamentals.
- Hydrogen production and safety training.

- Electric vehicle charging point installation and maintenance.
- Circular economy principles covering recycling and remanufacturing; and
- Carbon auditing and emissions calculation.

3.11.5 GOVERNANCE, DECISION-MAKING, AND PARTNER CONFIRMATION

BDC has established an initial governance project team that oversees the optioneering and partner confirmation, following the sprint period. Once funding and partners are confirmed, this will be transitioned to a multi-partner governance board for the Hub, including the lead FE college partner(s), as well as industry and employer representatives and other partners.

Currently the BDC project oversight team includes BDC's:

- Climate Change Officer;
- Deputy CEO;
- Head of Economic Development;
- Head of Planning; and
- Programme and Major Projects Manager.

The RLB team currently reports into this group. The project is sponsored by Chris Fridlington, Director, at BDC, and Richard Winter, BDC's Climate Change Officer.

As all partners have put forward viable plans for the building and expressed interest in committing to lead or co-lead the Hub, the final selection of governance board and Terms of Reference will be on hold until these are confirmed.

The current group will oversee optioneering and the progression of the Hub Delivery Plan and Timeline noted above (section **3.6**).

4.0 RLB RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

RLB and BDC have received detailed options, including operational information, building and equipment needs, proposed course offerings, and estimated costs and outputs. These are summarised for each partner in **Appendix D** below. RLB has the following recommendations for BDC and EMCCA on next steps against the EMIZ Hub Delivery Plan, which is to refine the offer and commence construction:

- Plans have progressed with viable plans provided by most partners. This means that the Hub has progressed through a milestone and is a positive sign for viability given the level of partner interest, but this does mean **BDC will need to narrow down options and select a lead partners**.
- The EMIZ Sprint has achieved its goals and is fully on track, but there is more work to be done to refine the delivery plans, match to a single building specification, and develop into delivery plans - including the elements that are new, e.g., tailored support for NEETs. RLB and BDC have submitted an EOI request for further funding.
- BDC should lnot select the lead delivery partners before clarity on future funding is realised. The refinement of plans based on when funding is clarified will not be a long exercise. However, **RLB recommends discussing with EMCCA at the earliest opportunity** to understand the timeline for clarity on capital and revenue funding.
- When requesting further developing funding and investment in the capital and revenue follow-on funding, BDC should point out the significant investment of its own regeneration funding that is being leveraged to support EMIZ ambitions and shared local attainment goals as part of its business case.
- New builds as well as retrofit have significant upcoming investment from recent policy announcements, and the Shirebrook Hub is formally earmarked in the MCS Foundation EMCCA retrofit strategy as the regional Retrofit Skill Hub, which opens opportunities for BDC. Thus, while MMC plans are promising, there needs to be at least some provision that supports retrofit trades. Fortunately, there is significant overlap in new build and retrofit disciplines.

APPENDIX A:
BOLSOVER AND EAST MIDLANDS ECONOMIC, LABOUR AND EDUCATION EVIDENCE

ONS DATA AND ANALYSIS

Source: *ONS, Qualification attainment, Bolsover, East Midlands and Great Britain, Jan 2024 to Dec 2024, source, ONS Annual Population Survey [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics]*

The tables below have been compiled by RLB based on the latest ONS Data for attainment and income for Bolsover. The information compares Bolsover's performance with the rest of the East Midlands and also with Great Britain as a whole. Where there is a significant difference, we have calculated the percentage difference from Great Britain and suggested where that points to an area of higher need of investment for Bolsover.

Qualifications (Jan 2024-Dec 2024)				
	Bolsover (numbers)	Bolsover (%)	East Midlands (%)	Great Britain (%)
RQF4 and above	15,100	30.0 (-17%)	42.2	47.6
RQF3 and above	26,700	53.1 (-14%)	65.4	67.9
RQF2 and above	41,700	83.0	85.4	86.7
RQF1 and above	42,200	83.9 (-5%)	88.9	89.1
Other qualifications	Not available	Not available	4.7	4.2
No qualifications	Not available	Not available	6.4	6.7

Source: ONS annual population survey
\# Sample size too small for reliable estimate (see definitions)
! Estimate is not available since sample size is disclosive (see definitions)
Notes: For an explanation of the qualification levels see the definitions section.
Numbers and % are for those of aged 16-64
% is a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64

For RFQ3 and 4, Bolsover is a full 14% and 17% below the population of GB, respectively. This shows a general attainment challenge in the district.

Earnings by place of residence (2024)			
	Bolsover (pounds)	East Midlands (pounds)	Great Britain (pounds)
Gross weekly pay			
Full-time workers	627.7 (-15%)	684.1	729.8
Male full-time workers	666.5 (-15%)	736.9	777.5
Female full-time workers	534.1 (-23%)	613.2	673.2

Earnings by place of residence (2024)			
Hourly pay - excluding overtime			
Full-time workers	**15.27 (-20%)**	17.28	18.73
Male full-time workers	**15.97 (-19%)**	18.03	19.37
Female full-time workers	**14.11 (-23%)**	16.18	17.92
Source: ONS annual survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis Notes: Median earnings in pounds for employees living in the area.			

Bolsover's earnings per resident and hourly pay rates are significantly lower than for the rest of the East Midlands and GB as a whole. While some costs like housing are relatively lower in Bolsover than GB as a whole, this is a strong indication of underemployment among adults in the district.

Claimant count by age - not seasonally adjusted (May 2025)				
	Bolsover (level)	**Bolsover (%)**	**East Midlands (%)**	**Great Britain (%)**
Aged 16+	1,570	3.1	3.7	4.1
Aged 16 to 17	5	**0.3**	0.2	0.2
Aged 18 to 24	360	**6.4**	5.1	5.5
Aged 18 to 21	235	**8.2**	5.4	5.9
Aged 25 to 49	875	3.5	4.2	4.7
Aged 50+	330	1.9	2.6	3.1
Source: ONS Claimant count by sex and age Note: % is number of claimants as a proportion of resident population of the same age				

The rate of claiming Universal Benefit claims in Bolsover is below the national average for people aged 25 to 49, but the rate of younger claimants in Bolsover District is significantly higher than the average for the wider East Midlands or Great Britain as a whole.

UK Business Counts (2024)				
	Bolsover (numbers)	**Bolsover (%)**	**East Midlands (numbers)**	**East Midlands (%)**
Enterprises				
	Bolsover	%	**East Midlands**	%
Micro (0 to 9)	1,940	86.6	161,910	88.9

UK Business Counts (2024)				
Small (10 to 49)	225	10.0	16,365	9.0
Medium (50 to 249)	60	2.7	2,980	1.6
Large (250+)	15	0.7	780	0.4
Total	2,240	-	182,030	-
Local Units				
Micro (0 to 9)	2,185	81.5	177,530	83.8
Small (10 to 49)	375	14.0	27,470	13.0
Medium (50 to 249)	105	3.9	5,875	2.8
Large (250+)	15	0.6	870	0.4
Total	2,680	-	211,750	-
Source: Inter Departmental Business Register (ONS)				
Note: % is as a proportion of total (enterprises or local units)				

As with most of Great Britain, microbusinesses make up a large proportion of the total number of businesses in Bolsover and East Midlands.

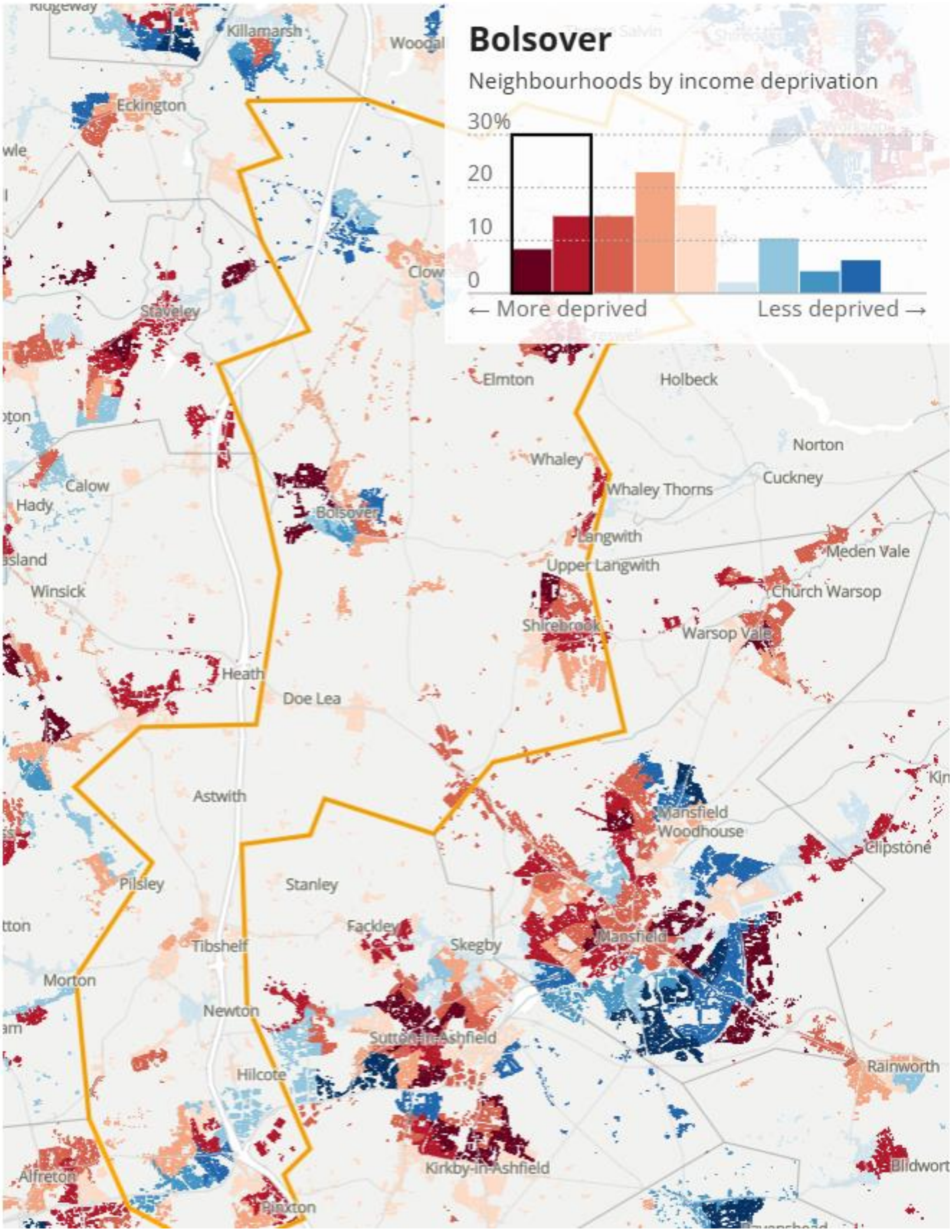


Figure 7 - ONC Income Deprivation, Bolsover and Shirebrook. Source: Exploring local income deprivation

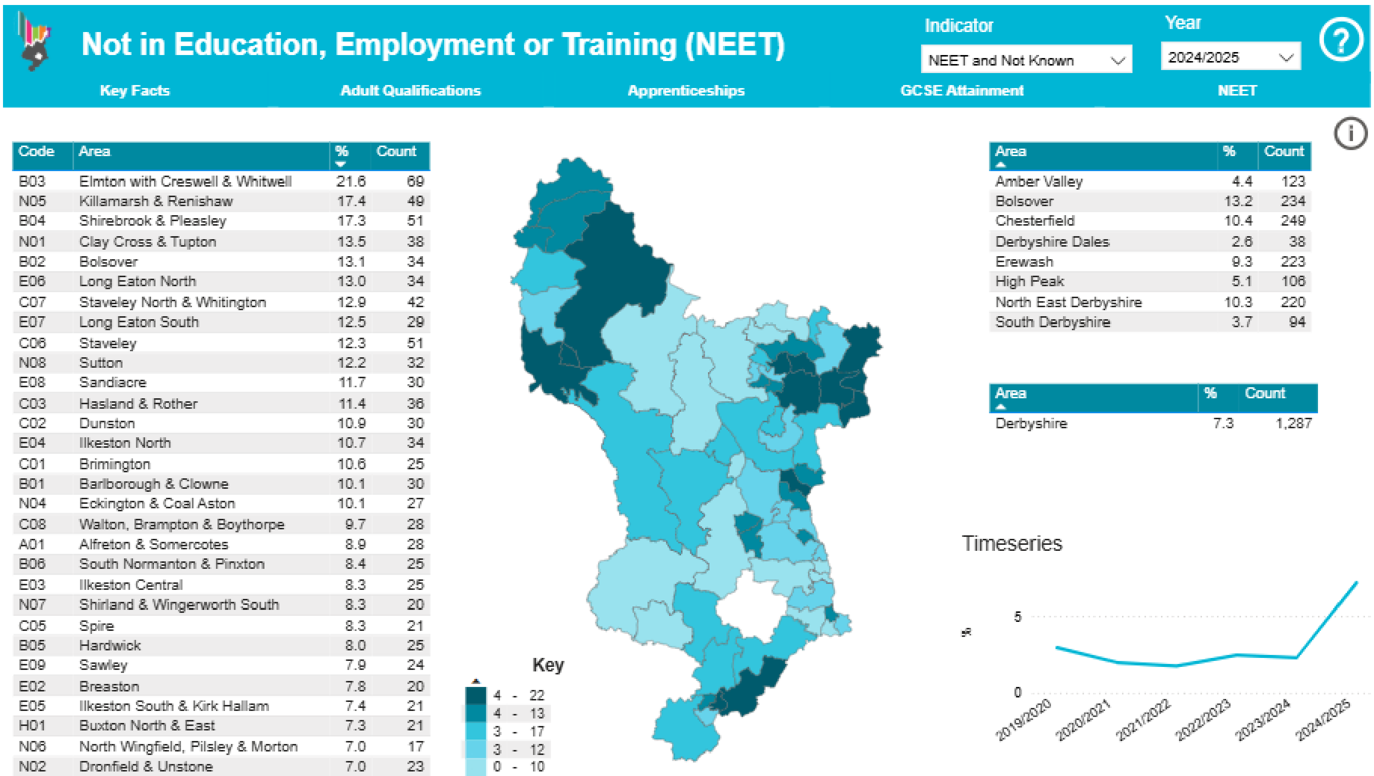
APPENDIX B:
DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL OBSERVATORY: 2025 AREA PROFILE DATA FOR BOLSOVER DISTRICT AND SHIREBROOK

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL OBSERVATORY, BOLSOVER AREA PROFILE 2025

Source:
Derbyshire
Derbyshire Observatory
Welcome to the Derbyshire Observatory - Derbyshire Observatory
Microsoft Power BI
Area Profiles - Derbyshire Observatory Bolsover District and Shirebrook & Pleasley Area Profiles, 2025

This section reviews 2025 evidence on Bolsover and Derbyshire from the Derbyshire County Council Observatory, which manages data for all the districts in the county. The information provides further context for the challenges that Bolsover needs to address to ensure its communities benefit, rather than fall behind, from shifts like the greening of our economy.

On NEETs, the data shows a significant increase in one year in the number of NEETs in Bolsover, which should be explored in relation to the plan of the Shirebrook Hub.



Code	Area	%	Count
B03	Elmton with Creswell & Whitwell	21.6	69
N05	Killamarsh & Renishaw	17.4	49
B04	Shirebrook & Pleasley	17.3	51
N01	Clay Cross & Tupton	13.5	38
B02	Bolsover	13.1	34
E06	Long Eaton North	13.0	34
C07	Staveley North & Whitington	12.9	42
E07	Long Eaton South	12.5	29
C06	Staveley	12.3	51
N08	Sutton	12.2	32
E08	Sandiacre	11.7	30
C03	Hasland & Rother	11.4	36
C02	Dunston	10.9	30
E04	Ilkeston North	10.7	34
C01	Brimington	10.6	25
B01	Barlborough & Clowne	10.1	30
N04	Eckington & Coal Aston	10.1	27
C08	Walton, Brampton & Boythorpe	9.7	28
A01	Alfreton & Somercotes	8.9	28
B06	South Normanton & Pinxton	8.4	25
E03	Ilkeston Central	8.3	25
N07	Shirland & Wingerworth South	8.3	20
C05	Spire	8.3	21
B05	Hardwick	8.0	25
E09	Sawley	7.9	24
E02	Breaston	7.8	20
E05	Ilkeston South & Kirk Hallam	7.4	21
H01	Buxton North & East	7.3	21
N06	North Wingfield, Pilsley & Morton	7.0	17
N02	Dronfield & Unstone	7.0	23

Area	%	Count
Amber Valley	4.4	123
Bolsover	13.2	234
Chesterfield	10.4	249
Derbyshire Dales	2.6	38
Erewash	9.3	223
High Peak	5.1	106
North East Derbyshire	10.3	220
South Derbyshire	3.7	94

Area	%	Count
Derbyshire	7.3	1,287

Figure 8 - Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) NEET Derbyshire Microsoft Power BI

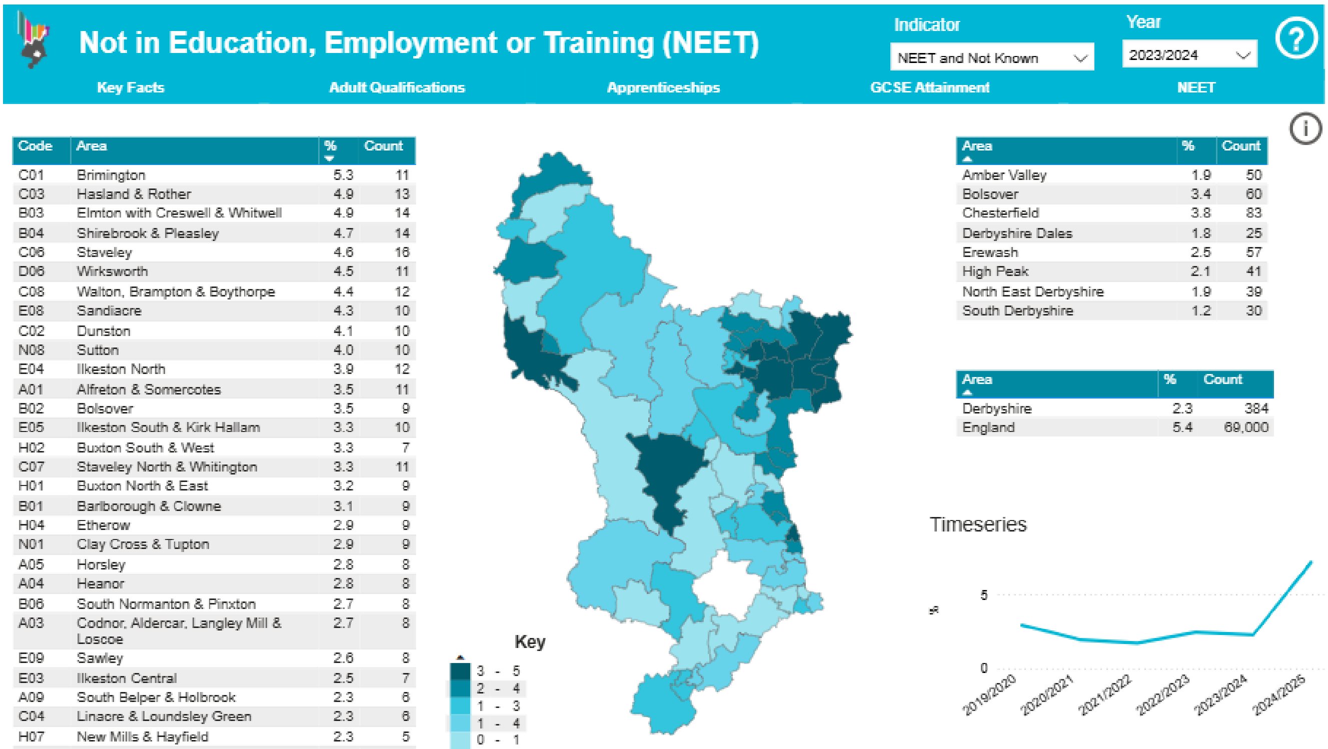


Figure 9 - Derbyshire County Council Observatory Adult Qualifications, 2024. Microsoft Power BI

Percentage of adults 16 to 64 with no qualifications is by far the highest in Derbyshire at 12.5%, and this has risen each year since at least 2022. This is double England-wide rate of 6.4%.

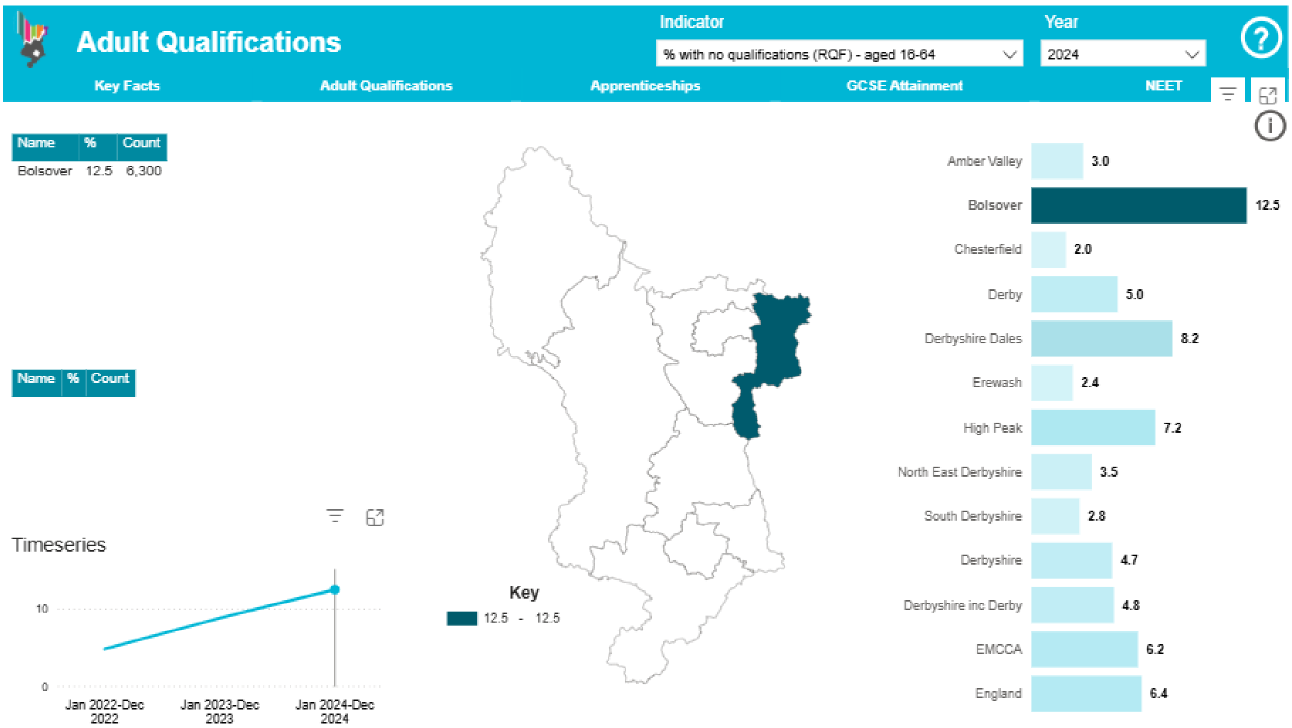


Figure 10 - Percentage of adults with no qualifications per district

Bolsover District, and Shirebrook and Pleasley in particular, face some of the largest challenges of any districts in England. According to ONS and other statistics collected and analysed by the Derbyshire County Council Observatory in 2025, **Bolsover District**:

- has the highest rates of deprivation, children in poverty and free school meal eligibility of any place in Derbyshire;
- has the highest fuel poverty rate in Derbyshire, with Elmton and Creswell the wards with the highest fuel poverty in Derbyshire;
- has the highest percentage of adults with no degree, adults with no qualifications

Shirebrook and Pleasley have the:

- highest deprivation and children in poverty rate of any ward in Derbyshire;
- fourth highest rate of youth unemployment;
- lowest rate of adults with a degree and the highest rate of adults with no qualifications;
- lowest life expectancy for men in Derbyshire;

2025 Area Summary Profile - Bolsover

The chart below compares a range of indicators for Derbyshire. The local result for each indicator is shown as a circle against the range of results for the chosen local geography within Derbyshire's administrative boundary. The latest available figures have been used for all indicators and the significance for the results are shown by different colours as detailed below. The rank shows the position of the local geography in comparison with the other areas and a rank of 1 shows the most deprived of areas or the highest rate in indicators such as Pupils with a statement of SEN or EHC, a Rank Quilt is also available which shows the rank position of the chosen local geography across the range of indicators included below.

- Significantly worse than Derbyshire average
- Not significantly different from Derbyshire average
- Significantly better than Derbyshire average
- No significance can be calculated

National Average | Derbyshire Average | Worst | Best | 25th percentile 75th

	Order	Indicator	Number	Rate	Rank	County	England	County Worst	Derbyshire Range	County Best	Metadata
People and place	1	Deprivation	8,036	22.8	1	17.7	18.1	22.8		13.7	% households, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	2	Children in poverty	4,707	27.3	1	21.1	19.7	27.3		16	% children, Under 20 Years, 2022/23, Stat-Xplore
	3	Free school meal eligibility (FSM)	3,638	34.8	1	28.1	24.6	34.8		20.5	% pupils, Compulsory school age, January 2024, DCC
	4	Pupils with statements of SEN or EHC	397	3.8	6	3.8	4.8	4.1		2.8	% pupils, Compulsory school age, January 2024, DCC
	5	Children in Need	562	350.7	2	345	332.9	428.1		202.3	/10,000 0-18 popn, Under 18 years, March 2024, DCC
	6	Resident satisfaction with local area	151	64.5	2	69.9		58.7		83.5	% respondents, 16 years and over, Nov 24 - Feb 25, DCC
	7	Library users	9,097	11	2	13.7		7.9		18.1	% popn, All ages, 2024, DCC
Housing	8	Median house price	1,366	165,000	8	220,000	275,000	320,000		165,000	£, 2023, Land Registry*
	9	Council tax band D & above	4,600	11.9	8	24.2	34.8	46.9		11.9	% dwellings, March 2024, VOA
	10	Fuel poverty	6,461	17.7	1	15.6	13.1	17.7		13	% households, 2022, DESNC
Community safety	11	All road traffic casualties	952	11.5	2	10.2		17.1		8.5	/1,000 popn, All ages, 01/11/2021-31/10/2024, DCC
	12	Anti-social behaviour (call for service)	1,716	20.7	4	19.7		28.2		13.9	/1,000 popn, All ages, 2023/24, Derbyshire Constabulary
	13	Total crime	6,034	72.8	25	68		226.6		28.1	/1,000 popn, All ages, 2023/24, Derbyshire Constabulary
	14	Violent crime	2,641	31.9	24	29		87.3		8.4	/1,000 popn, All ages, 2023/24, Derbyshire Constabulary
	15	Local area safe at night	111	47.3	4	50.7		38.9		71.7	% respondents, 16 years and over, Nov 24 - Feb 25, DCC
	16	Local area safe in day	188	80	3	83.7		76.3		93.3	% respondents, 16 years and over, Nov 24 - Feb 25, DCC
Economy	17	Employment Rate	38,100	57.5	5	57.5	57.4	54.4		62	% popn, 16+ years, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	18	Economically inactive	26,625	40.2	5	40.2	39.1	43.7		35.7	% popn, 16+ years, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	19	Unemployment rate (overall)	1,630	3.2	3	2.9	4.3	3.7		2.1	% popn, 16 to 64 years, January 2025, NOMIS
	20	Youth unemployment	370	5.2	2	4.4	4.5	5.7		2.4	% popn, 16 to 24 years, January 2025, NOMIS
Education	21	Adults with a degree	14,406	21.7	1	29.4	33.9	21.7		39.2	% popn, 16 years and over, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	22	Adults with no qualifications	16,018	24.2	1	18.9	18.1	24.2		14.9	% popn, 16 years and over, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	23	English and Maths GCSE grade 9-4	428	56.9	1	64.2	65.4	56.9		70.6	% pupils, Key Stage 4 Pupils, 2022/23, DCC
	24	KS2 (expected attainment in R, W & M)	543	60.9	7	58.9	61	56.9		61	% pupils, Key Stage 2 Pupils, 2022/23, DCC
	25	EYFS pupils achieving good development	551	66.3	4	66.9	67.7	63.5		69.8	% EYFS pupils, 4 to 5 years, 2022/23, DCC
	26	School absenteeism - Secondary	1,080	24.9	3	24.4	26.5	26.6		22.4	% pupils, Compulsory school age cohort - secondary, 2023/24, DCC
	27	School absenteeism - Primary	924	15.3	1	12.6	16.2	15.3		9.7	% pupils, Compulsory school age cohort - primary, 2023/24, DCC
Health & wellbeing	28	Life expectancy at birth - males		76.9	1	78.5	78.9	76.9		80.7	Years, At birth, 2020-2022, DCC
	29	Life expectancy at birth - females		80.4	1	82.2	82.8	80.4		84.5	Years, At birth, 2020-2022, DCC
	30	Early death - circulatory disease	210	90	1	76.6	76	90		61.5	DSR /100,000 popn, Under 75 years, 2020-2022, DCC
	31	Early death - cancer	362	155.1	1	125.8	123.2	155.1		100.4	DSR /100,000 popn, Under 75 years, 2020-2022, DCC
	32	All-age, all-cause mortality (AAACM)	2,947	1,219.2	1	1,061.5	1,012.5	1,219.2		897.2	DSR /100,000 popn, All ages, 2020-2022, DCC
	33	Admissions, alcohol specific conditions	558	677.1	3	630.3	625.9	835.1		457.8	DSR /100,000 popn, All ages, 2021/2022, DCC
	34	Admissions, injuries due to falls 65+	355	2,262.5	3	2,190	2,099.9	2,697.7		1,793.4	DSR /100,000 popn, Aged 65+, 2021/2022, DCC
	35	Obese children - Reception	264	11.7	1	9.2	964.5	11.7		8	% children measured, 4 to 5 years, 2021/22-2023/24, DCC
	36	Obese children - Year 6	647	26.3	1	21	2,209.3	26.3		17.2	% children measured, 10 to 11 years, 2021/22-2023/24, DCC
	37	Breast feeding at 6 - 8 weeks	273	41	1	46.5	4,920	41		53.4	% of 6-8 week infants, All maternal ages, 2022/23, DCHS
	38	Receiving long-term support in the community	1,104	16.5	2	14		18.5		9.8	/1,000 popn, All adults aged 18+, 2023/24, DCC
	39	Unpaid care provision	8,508	11.2	1	10.2	8.8	11.2		9.2	% popn, Aged 5 and Over, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	40	'Limited' day-to-day activities	18,343	22.9	2	20.1	17.3	23		17.2	% popn, All ages, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	41	Travel time to nearest GP	611	12.7	7	13.6	13.2	17.4		12.1	Ave hhold travel time, public transport or walking, All ages, 2019, DfT

Figure 11 - Bolsover District 2025 Area Summary Profile. Source: [Area Profile Tool 2023 0.02.xlsm]

2025 Area Summary Profile - Shirebrook & Pleasley

The chart below compares a range of indicators for Derbyshire. The local result for each indicator is shown as a circle against the range of results for the chosen local geography within Derbyshire's administrative boundary. The latest available figures have been used for all indicators and the significance for the results are shown by different colours as detailed below. The rank shows the position of the local geography in comparison with the other areas and a rank of 1 shows the most deprived of areas or the highest rate in indicators such as Pupils with a statement of SEN or EHC, a Rank Quilt is also available which shows the rank position of the chosen local geography across the range of indicators included below.

- Significantly worse than Derbyshire average
- Not significantly different from Derbyshire average
- Significantly better than Derbyshire average
- No significance can be calculated

National Average | Derbyshire Average | Worst | Best | 25th percentile 75th

	Order	Indicator	Number	Rate	Rank	County	England	County Worst	Derbyshire Ra	County Best	Metadata
People and place	1	Deprivation	1,769	28.3	1	17.7	18.1	28.3		8.3	% households, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	2	Children in poverty	1,082	33.3	1	21.1	19.7	33.3		8.9	% children, Under 20 Years, 2022/23, Stat-Xplore
	3	Free school meal eligibility (FSM)	750	39.2	7	28.1	24.6	46.7		6.9	% pupils, Compulsory school age, January 2024, DCC
	4	Pupils with statements of SEN or EHC	69	3.6	33	3.8	4.8	6		2	% pupils, Compulsory school age, January 2024, DCC
	5	Children in Need	88	370.5	30	345	332.9	859.4		53.9	/10,000 0-18 popn, Under 18 years, March 2024, DCC
	6	Resident satisfaction with local area	16	46.6	4	69.9		41		100	% respondents, 16 years and over, Nov 24 - Feb 25, DCC
	7	Library users	1,664	11.4	16	13.7		2.4		24.2	% popn, All ages, 2024, DCC
Housing	8	Median house price	197	140,000	64	220,000	275,000	374,995		140,000	£, 2023, Land Registry*
	9	Council tax band D & above	250	3.7	64	24.2	34.8	66.2		3.7	% dwellings, March 2024, VOA
	10	Fuel poverty	1,148	17.8	12	15.6	13.1	22.4		9.8	% households, 2022, DESNC
Community safety	11	All road traffic casualties	122	8.4	36	10.2		21.5		2.7	/1,000 popn, All ages, 01/11/2021-31/10/2024, DCC
	12	Anti-social behaviour (call for service)	391	26.9	14	19.7		60		8.2	/1,000 popn, All ages, 2023/24, Derbyshire Constabulary
	13	Total crime	1,283	88.1	14	68		226.6		28.1	/1,000 popn, All ages, 2023/24, Derbyshire Constabulary
	14	Violent crime	599	41.1	11	29		87.3		8.4	/1,000 popn, All ages, 2023/24, Derbyshire Constabulary
	15	Local area safe at night	9	26.4	3	50.7		17		92.5	% respondents, 16 years and over, Nov 24 - Feb 25, DCC
	16	Local area safe in day	26	73.2	10	83.7		59.9		100	% respondents, 16 years and over, Nov 24 - Feb 25, DCC
Economy	17	Employment Rate	6,860	57.9	35	57.5	57.4	49.5		67	% popn, 16+ years, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	18	Economically inactive	4,739	40	31	40.2	39.1	48.9		30.9	% popn, 16+ years, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	19	Unemployment rate (overall)	360	3.9	13	2.9	4.3	5		1.5	% popn, 16 to 64 years, January 2025, NOMIS
	20	Youth unemployment	95	6.7	5	4.4	4.5	7.2		.5	% popn, 16 to 24 years, January 2025, NOMIS
Education	21	Adults with a degree	2,072	17.5	1	29.4	33.9	17.5		48.5	% popn, 16 years and over, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	22	Adults with no qualifications	3,465	29.2	1	18.9	18.1	29.2		9.7	% popn, 16 years and over, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	23	English and Maths GCSE grade 9-4	74	54.8	12	64.2	65.4	45.8		82.8	% pupils, Key Stage 4 Pupils, 2022/23, DCC
	24	KS2 (expected attainment in R, W & M)	96	55.2	20	58.9	61	42.6		72.8	% pupils, Key Stage 2 Pupils, 2022/23, DCC
	25	EYFS pupils achieving good development	111	66.1	26	66.9	67.7	49		86	% EYFS pupils, 4 to 5 years, 2022/23, DCC
	26	School absenteeism - Secondary	232	30.7	9	24.4	26.5	36.2		13	% pupils, Compulsory school age cohort - secondary, 2023/24, DCC
	27	School absenteeism - Primary	233	19.6	1	12.6	16.2	19.6		7	% pupils, Compulsory school age cohort - primary, 2023/24, DCC
Health & wellbeing	28	Life expectancy at birth - males		75.1	1	78.5	78.9	75.1		88.3	Years, At birth, 2020-2022, DCC
	29	Life expectancy at birth - females		82.7	5	82.2	82.8	81.9		93.7	Years, At birth, 2020-2022, DCC
	30	Early death - circulatory disease	43	111.8	5	76.6	76	136.2		38.7	DSR /100,000 popn, Under 75 years, 2020-2022, DCC
	31	Early death - cancer	67	177.6	5	125.8	123.2	197.2		71.8	DSR /100,000 popn, Under 75 years, 2020-2022, DCC
	32	All-age, all-cause mortality (AAACM)	535	1,345.1	3	1,061.5	1,012.5	1,567.6		746	DSR /100,000 popn, All ages, 2020-2022, DCC
	33	Admissions, alcohol specific conditions	133	454.1	7	630.3	625.9	643.9		72.1	DSR /100,000 popn, All ages, 2021/2022, DCC
	34	Admissions, injuries due to falls 65+	68	2,641.3	9	2,190	2,099.9	3,645.5		1,047.3	DSR /100,000 popn, Aged 65+, 2021/2022, DCC
	35	Obese children - Reception	37	11.2	11	9.2	964.5	13.8		4.1	% children measured, 4 to 5 years, 2021/22-2023/24, DCC
	36	Obese children - Year 6	118	34.9	1	21	2,209.3	34.9		11	% children measured, 10 to 11 years, 2021/22-2023/24, DCC
	37	Breast feeding at 6 - 8 weeks	33	35.9	9	46.5	4,920	24.7		84.6	% of 6-8 week infants, All maternal ages, 2022/23, DCHS
	38	Receiving long-term support in the community	197	20.5	19	14		31.7		6.5	/1,000 popn, All adults aged 18+, 2023/24, DCC
	39	Unpaid care provision	1,565	11.4	4	10.2	8.8	12.1		7.6	% popn, Aged 5 and Over, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	40	'Limited' day-to-day activities	3,508	24.2	8	20.1	17.3	25.7		13.5	% popn, All ages, March 2021, 2021 Census (ONS)*
	41	Travel time to nearest GP	74	10.6	53	13.6	13.2	24.5		8.4	Ave hhold travel time, public transport or walking, All ages, 2019, DfT

Figure 12 - Shirebrook & Pleasley 2025 Area Summary Profile. Source: Area Profile Tool 2023 0.02.xlsm

APPENDIX C:
RIDER LEVETT BUCKNALL BOLSOVER GREEN ECONOMY LABOUR MARKET WORKFORCE STRENGTH ASSESSMENT (2024)

RIDER LEVETT BUCKNALL LABOUR MARKET AND SKILLS DATA (2024)

Source: *RLB 2024 Analysis Labour Green Employment Sectors Workforce Strength Analysis*

Below for reference is the labour market analysis of 2021 census data comparing the workforce strength relative to population of each employment sub-sector, comparing Bolsover with England as a whole.

RLB also coded each of the 88 sector codes by whether they were Core, Enabling or adversely impacted by the net zero and green transition, in line with the "Core, Enabling and Peripheral" categories established in 2023 Climate Change Committee report on a Net Zero Workforce (A Net Zero workforce - Climate Change Committee)

Data source: ONS

Green Economy Sector Key	Colour
CORE Green Economic Subsector	
ENABLING Green Economic Subsector	
AT RISK CORE Green Sub-sector - most at risk of job loss during transition	

Employment Subsector Analysis: Bolsover Workforce Strength	England & Wales Sector Workforce 2021	England & Wales Total Workforce	Bolsover Sector Workforce	Bolsover Total Workforce	Bolsover to England/ Wales Workforce Strength Ratio	Advantage, Competitive or Disadvantage
05 Mining of coal and lignite	1,960	31,823,878	19	42,173	7.3 : 1	Advantage
08 Other mining and quarrying	11,852	31,823,878	60	42,173	3.8 : 1	Advantage
24 Manufacture of basic metals	65,933	31,823,878	242	42,173	2.7 : 1	Advantage
23 Manufacture of other non-metallic mineral products	46,876	31,823,878	160	42,173	2.5 : 1	Advantage
25 Manufacture of fabricated metal products, except machinery and equipment	143,887	31,823,878	429	42,173	2.2 : 1	Advantage
27 Manufacture of electrical equipment	42,984	31,823,878	126	42,173	2.2 : 1	Advantage
30 Manufacture of other transport equipment	110,192	31,823,878	306	42,173	2.1 : 1	Advantage
52 Warehousing and support activities for transportation	288,557	31,823,878	751	42,173	1.9 : 1	Advantage
37 Sewerage	12,392	31,823,878	32	42,173	1.9 : 1	Advantage
38 Waste collection, treatment and disposal activities; materials recovery	109,172	31,823,878	280	42,173	1.9 : 1	Advantage
20 Manufacture of chemicals and chemical products	62,939	31,823,878	143	42,173	1.7 : 1	Advantage
45 Wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	438,866	31,823,878	982	42,173	1.6 : 1	Advantage

32 Other Manufacturing	293,740	31,823,878	639	42,173	1.6	:	1	Advantage
19 Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products	11,403	31,823,878	23	42,173	1.5	:	1	Advantage
33 Repair and installation of machinery and equipment	44,641	31,823,878	85	42,173	1.4	:	1	Advantage
07 Mining of metal ores	529	31,823,878	1	42,173	1.4	:	1	Advantage
49 Land transport and transport via pipelines	697,122	31,823,878	1,105	42,173	1.2	:	1	Competitive
41 Construction of buildings; 42 Civil engineering; 43 Specialised construction activities	2,406,237	31,823,878	3,712	42,173	1.1	:	1	Competitive
29 Manufacture of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers	190,319	31,823,878	287	42,173	1.1	:	1	Competitive
17 Manufacture of paper and paper products	25,831	31,823,878	36	42,173	1.0	:	1	Competitive
36 Water collection, treatment and supply	76,631	31,823,878	105	42,173	1.0	:	1	Competitive
84 Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	1,646,592	31,823,878	2,137	42,173	0.9	:	1	Competitive
35 Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	161,610	31,823,878	205	42,173	0.9	:	1	Competitive
82 Office administrative, office support and other business support activities	208,523	31,823,878	262	42,173	0.9	:	1	Competitive
81 Services to buildings and landscape activities	707,730	31,823,878	849	42,173	0.9	:	1	Competitive
09 Mining support service activities	2,566	31,823,878	3	42,173	0.8	:	1	Competitive
02 Forestry and logging	7,326	31,823,878	8	42,173	0.8	:	1	Disadvantage
85 Education	2,732,861	31,823,878	2,931	42,173	0.8	:	1	Disadvantage
78 Employment activities	190,313	31,823,878	196	42,173	0.7	:	1	Disadvantage
03 Fishing and aquaculture	5,987	31,823,878	6	42,173	0.7	:	1	Disadvantage
71 Architectural and engineering activities; technical testing and analysis	371,574	31,823,878	348	42,173	0.7	:	1	Disadvantage
01 Crop and animal production, hunting and related service activities	223,731	31,823,878	195	42,173	0.6	:	1	Disadvantage
68 Real estate activities	430,487	31,823,878	304	42,173	0.5	:	1	Disadvantage
74 Other professional, scientific and technical activities	165,748	31,823,878	114	42,173	0.5	:	1	Disadvantage
69 Legal and accounting activities	609,511	31,823,878	403	42,173	0.5	:	1	Disadvantage
66 Activities auxiliary to financial services and insurance activities	296,860	31,823,878	189	42,173	0.4	:	1	Disadvantage
70 Activities of head offices; management consultancy activities	249,243	31,823,878	138	42,173	0.4	:	1	Disadvantage
39 Remediation activities and other waste management services	5,515	31,823,878	3	42,173	0.4	:	1	Disadvantage
51 Air transport	59,340	31,823,878	32	42,173	0.4	:	1	Disadvantage
65 Insurance, reinsurance and pension funding, except compulsory social security	266,491	31,823,878	135	42,173	0.3	:	1	Disadvantage
06 Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas	25,785	31,823,878	13	42,173	0.3	:	1	Disadvantage
50 Water transport	27,947	31,823,878	14	42,173	0.3	:	1	Disadvantage
64 Financial service activities, except insurance and pension funding	483,410	31,823,878	231	42,173	0.3	:	1	Disadvantage
72 Scientific research and development	131,907	31,823,878	41	42,173	0.2	:	1	Disadvantage

Challenges of Bolsover Green Economy	Opportunities for Bolsover Green Economy	Source
17% of the workforce are 'underemployed', with a lack of quality job opportunities cited as the primary barrier to employment. 27% are overqualified for their job.	There is a strong appetite for learning, with 68% of survey respondents indicating they would like to undertake training and learning in the next two years.	**Bolsover Skills Audit[10]**
Residents experience uncertainty around what skills are relevant to their current or future job	63% of survey respondents had received training from their employer, indicating the willingness of businesses to offer training	
The survey suggests that people in lower-skilled and lower-paid occupations receive significantly less in-work training.	High uptake of digital technologies (mobile devices, email and internet)	
Behind other authorities on retrofit funding, levelling up and other capacity-building	Skilled workforce and employment levels in some critical net zero sectors, including manufacturing and construction	RLB analysis of ONS and BEIS data
Lower than-average vacancies and workforce participation	Younger than average workforce compared to the rest of England	ONS Census Data 2021
Post-16 education delivery within the district and lack of transport for training and work	Alignment of net zero and key agendas—fuel poverty, business competitiveness, upskilling and employability	Sept 17, 2023, BDC Roundtable
Perception of lack of aspiration—need to raise internal and external perception of opportunities within the district and region by building stronger real links.	Great existing engagement channels with businesses and a solid economic sector mix, including a large number of SMEs	Stakeholder Interview

[10] *Richard Crisp and Elizabeth Sanderson, Bolsover Skills Audit, Sheffield Hallam University, 2022 [Bolsover Skills Audit | Sheffield Hallam University]*

Like other UK regions, it has never recovered from poorly planned previous energy and economic transitions, mainly the transition from coal to gas, in parallel with the decline of manufacturing.	Well-placed between several regional hubs of economic activity, high vacancies in surrounding areas	Sept 17, 2023, BDC Roundtable
Some new build housing and economic schemes in the DCC region in the future without net zero systems, missing local green job opportunities.	Bolsover has a unique potential for cost-effective district heating linked to its mining heritage across the district.	Stakeholder Interview

EAST MIDLANDS INVESTMENT ZONE SPRINT

Engaging Supply Chain SMEs in the Housing Industry's Procurement Process

The Perceived Problem

The East Midlands has new Combined Authority status, currently defined as including only two of the East Midland's six counties, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, but with the potential to grow. England now has 14 combined authorities, and ours, with a population of around 2.2million is averagely sized, centrally located, but lacking the monocentric urban structure that defines many of our 'competitors'. Inward investment is key to growing a regional economy, and in that respect, we are in competition with our neighbours as we try to promote 'green technologies and advanced manufacturing' as our chosen themes. But the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and UK government reports (e.g. BEIS, DLUHC) often indicate that over 80% of regional economic growth comes from the expansion and productivity gains of existing businesses, and less than 20% from new inward investors.

If we decide therefore to make better use of what we already have as a major component of our strategic plan for growth, we need to be honest about what our workforce consists of, which is a disproportionately high number of SMEs distributed across our two counties, largely in rural and small town settings. In the UK as a whole, approximately 60% of the workforce is employed through SMEs, but SMEs can employ up to 250 people, so account for over 97% of all businesses. It is our disproportionately high number of micro SMEs, with under 25 employees that makes for a large number of individuals who need to be engaged with to reach over half our working population. In our expansive rural areas, that proportion of SMEs is even higher at around 70% so this is not an issue we can afford to ignore. (Appendix i)

The evidence is there to suggest that engaging with our SMEs needs to form a critical part of any regional growth strategy or our ability to enact any changes in how we operate as a Combined Authority through our new devolved powers. The evidence is also there to back up the term often used to describe SMEs – hard to reach. At a very basic level this should not be unexpected, as there are many of them and they are, by definition, small, and focused on more immediate concerns than helping governments to enact their latest policy decisions. But it is also true that influencing 500 people through one conversation is far more appealing proposition than influencing 5 people at a time through a hundred conversations, which explains why policy enactment tends to gravitate towards, and favour, big business.

It is also why, especially within the fragmented and adversarial construction industry that this trial focuses on, the enactment of government policies rarely seems to have the impact expected or desired. The easy follow-on to taking the easy path of engaging only with tier one businesses, is to depict the whole construction industry as a 'difficult child' that refuses to be helped, whereas the reality is that with over half the industry not involved in the decisions being made on their behalf, it is perhaps unsurprising that SMEs fail to see the benefit to them in making the changes to their working practices asked of them. This is now an accepted point of view, and one that has influenced the new Procurement Act 2023, launched this March in an attempt to level the playing field for SMEs by promoting the benefits of procuring more directly from smaller suppliers. But it also aims to reduce 'red tape' by making many of its recommendations to procurers voluntary and therefore less enforceable. As a Combined Authority however, we have an opportunity to improve on this to our regional advantage.

The Proposal

The fundamental aim of this feasibility study was to gather empirical evidence of the barriers to engagement encountered by SMEs trying to bid for public sector projects, and to use that knowledge to inform how we could develop a platform that would help us make better use of our existing talent to grow our regional economy.

The evidence was needed to back up what had already been surmised from previous research by those involved in the project, from personal experience, from work carried out for the CIH (Construction Innovation Hub) and from anecdotal evidence from other sources in the sector. The danger, and one that the team were well aware of from the outset, was one of 'second guessing' the SME sector's issues in the absence of first-hand knowledge. The temptation to do so, was nevertheless difficult to resist, especially when that evidence was so hard to extract.

The aim was to focus this study on the construction sector, and to focus that within the Bolsover district, with a view to then extending the study in a later phase to cover all industry sectors and the whole of the EMCCA region of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. With only a three month window, this was already a challenging proposition, but by combining efforts with Bolsover's existing NZIP (Net Zero Innovation Programme), aimed at helping businesses retrofit their premises to reduce their costs and carbon footprints, we hoped to reach a good cross section of SMEs either working within or supplying the construction sector.

The feedback was then to be used to develop a way to help SMEs engage with the procurement process and break down the barriers as they perceived them. But that alone would not have been enough to bring about the change that the new Procurement Act 2023 had set out to achieve. The details of this are discussed later, but requesting that procurers should procure more from SMEs without addressing the reasons why they currently do not, was never likely to bring about any meaningful change, especially if it were not set out as a statutory obligation for them to do so. The research carried out therefore had to also involve the procurers in a bid to understand what it was that they needed SMEs to do to make them a more appealing proposition.

There was however a third party that had to be considered for this proposal to have credibility. The SMEs needed to be reached and a way found to engage them, the procurers needed to be convinced of the benefits to be had from using SMEs to fulfil their contracts, but the catalyst for change also has to be there in the form of either carrots – incentives, or sticks – legislation before any transition can be seen as 'worth the effort'. In the absence of any strong, mandatory legislation driving this agenda, the incentives for both parties to engage have to be compelling.

EMCCA has new devolved powers and it has a budget, but its real strength lies in how it can mobilise regional businesses to see the benefit of 'regional on-shoring' and growing our regional economy by procuring more locally. By endorsing a campaign to bring our procurement back into our own region, a virtuous circle can be set in motion that, with public support, will drive business and income back into the East Midlands. (Appendix ii)

The Approach

To get that level of endorsement from EMCCA requires there to be a business model that will ensure that their investment will be limited to setting up a platform to encourage engagement with no commitment beyond that. No funded project should be without a means for supporting itself going forwards, but all too often the longevity of projects is not considered at the outset and, as a consequence, they are short lived and ineffective.

The business model for this platform is key to how it will operate as well as how it will be funded, and involves the many industry bodies who support and advise SMEs across multiple sectors. In this pilot project, just the industry bodies supporting the construction sector have been approached with this mutually beneficial proposition:

SMEs are hard to reach because there are so many of them and they are small, but also – as the generalisation goes - because they have more immediate priorities and less cash reserves than larger companies, making them reluctant to engage with longer term strategies for growth. This much is as likely to be true as it is as unlikely to change, so an approach is needed that accepts this reality and works within its constraints.

The approach being proposed is one that reaches these SMEs through the many industry bodies that support them, on the assumption that most, if not all SMEs, are affiliated to at least one membership body, either through a trade organisation, a professional Institution, regulatory or advisory body or some support mechanism that they pay an annual fee to. The business model involves these industry bodies paying a nominal percentage of their membership fees to help maintain a central web-based signposting service that SMEs can only access through their membership organisation's site. In return for this, they get to provide a useful service to their members, and they get traffic directed to their sites to gain access to this resource and sometimes even take out a new membership for that privilege.

The benefit to us, beyond these industry bodies allowing us to reach far more SMEs than we could directly, is that we can filter the information provided to SMEs via the central resource and ensure its relevance based upon the route they entered through.

The feedback needed now therefore, is around what information this resource would need to contain for SMEs to make it easier for them to engage with the procurement process and equally what could we do through this site to make SMEs a more appealing proposition for procures to consider them for their projects. (Appendix iii)

That feedback was initially expected to come through workshops and focus groups, but due to the very problem this project sets out to overcome, SME engagement with this has proven to be impossible in the numbers needed to gather reliable statistical evidence. Questionnaires were therefore used as a substitute and sent out to SMEs through supporting industry bodies that we had already explained the business model to. What was still missing however, to give the project credibility in the eyes of a jaded industry, tired of new initiatives and in need of some assurance before investing any time - even to fill out a questionnaire, was endorsement from our Combined Authority.

The Research Team

Holistic approaches require teams with a breadth of knowledge and experience. Simple-to-explain projects with clear, predefined outcomes are unlikely to deliver meaningful change, as the problems we are facing are complex, interrelated and often entrenched, requiring equally complex interrelated approaches to unpick them.

This multidisciplinary team draws on knowledge from the construction industry, relational database development, sustainability, behavioural change, business development and Systems Thinking. Most of us also straddle industry and academia and have personal experience of the problems we are trying to solve, but also an awareness of the regulatory framework that exists and its direction of travel.

- Dr Mike Siebert, Visiting Fellow, School of Architecture Design and the Built Environment
- Dr Emmanuel Manu, Associate Professor, Construction Management (CON)
- Dr Rachel Macrorie, Research Fellow, School of Architecture Design and the Built Environment
- Dr Sonnich Sonnichsen, Associate Professor, Management (SMI)
- Dr Zeng Fan, Research Fellow, Management (SMI)
- Dr Rose Deakin, Carbon Management Consultant, Nottingham Business School (NBS)

Prior knowledge

The solution being proposed here builds off previous research carried out independently by different members of the team in recent years. A combined understanding of SME's, the housing industry, database development and the procurement process has resulted in a platform for knowledge transfer that works for all the parties involved from EMCCA down to the smallest micro SMEs.

The need for mutual benefit

Work carried out by Dr Mike Siebert as part of the Construction Innovation Hub's 'Transforming Construction Challenge' culminated in a theoretical approach that recognised the need for a two-way street of information between procurer and supplier to be established around mutual benefit, with a business model in place to support it. The key barriers to engaging with the procurement process outlined by SMEs are covered in Appendix iv:

The need for aggregated capabilities

Work at CBIT had at the same time developed a programme that allowed for the aggregation of SMEs' capabilities that would make them a more appealing prospect for procurers. An earlier version of the model has been trialled before and now needs further development based on the evidence gathered and populating with the definitions used to categorise the construction industry's supply chain needs. (Appendix xiii)

The need for procurement reform

Additional knowledge of the procurement process from Dr Emmanual Manu's PhD research has helped inform the ways in which the industry has developed over the decades and how the Procurement Act's failings can be addressed in a regional context (Appendix v)

The need for inclusive growth

Claire Ward's call for inclusive growth is a recognition of the need for us to make better use of our SME skills base and ensure that growth is not limited to our cities, hubs and clusters. The term 'Network Economy' better describes the growth model that we need to see in the East Midlands. Dr Rachel Macrorie has been studying the housing sector and its need to find an alternative business model that will both support off site manufacturing and increase our ability to meet a growing demand for housing (Appendix vi)

The Procurement Act 2023

The Procurement Act was passed in October 2023 but the Act's implementation was postponed by the current Labour government and only came into force in February this year. Its key objectives were to streamline the procurement process by stripping out over 350 EU-mandated rules, reducing bureaucracy, simplifying access, improving transparency, and prioritising social value, but essentially it aimed to level the playing field for SMEs and social enterprises.

To this end, it has introduced new mechanisms like standardized documentation, open tender frameworks, and central digital platforms such as the Find a Tender Service (FTS), accessed through the gov.uk website.

It has also attempted to strengthen SME inclusion through measures like reserved contracts, breaking contracts into smaller lots, shorter payment terms (30 days), and the introduction of spend targets with SMEs/VCSEs (Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises).

One of the incidental outcomes of this which has coincided with the formation of the East Midlands' Combined Authority, is the benefits the Act brings for regional and local growth, with authorities now better able to work directly with their many local SMEs to achieve greater regional economic impact – in theory.

As is often the case, however, there is scepticism on all sides, but especially from the SMEs who see this as yet another change that carries an administrative burden for potentially little gain because of the voluntary nature of the measures being introduced. In addition to this there was a flurry of new framework agreements announced prior to the Act's launch ensuring that the new requirements were postponed in many cases for another 4 years, all of which means that SMEs are not meeting this opportunity with the enthusiasm expected.

A second consultation was then set up that ran until September 2025 asking for feedback in how this Act has been received with a view to revisiting some of its measures. In the meantime, this project aims to build off the positives and find ways in which SMEs can be encouraged to take advantage of the Act's attempts to bring clarity and simplicity to what has been an opaque and complex process for too long. (Appendix vii)

Project Realities

The aims of the project have not changed, but the methods for achieving those aims have had to evolve in the face of problems encountered:

Poor response from SMEs invited to attend workshops

Getting SMEs to engage with a programme such as this was always going to be difficult for all the reasons already known and central to the need for this project. It was soon realised this was not going to be a successful way to get the feedback required.

Failure to combine efforts with NZIP programme of workshops

An extension was therefore requested so that the project could align with the NZIP workshops and events being held in the same district, but two of the three workshops were cancelled due to low numbers and the third only had two participants turn up, despite these workshops paying out £300 for attending, only providing further evidence of the need to find more enticing ways to engage this sector of the workforce.

Low response to questionnaires sent out to SMEs

Questionnaires were then written and sent out to named SMEs together with a version for Procurers, but with an equally poor success rate. These were then sent out through the participating Industry bodies to their members and through the four local authorities as procurers resulting in a total of 34 responses so far and rising, but still not enough to count as quantitative data.

Slow response to request for EMCCA to endorse project to provide greater credibility

Requests to EMCCA to endorse the project were made on the basis that response levels would be far greater if it were seen to be supported at a political level as part of a campaign to grow our regional economy. This has now been received but not in time for the project's deadlines.

Delays pushing the project into the holiday season

The collective impact of these delays has been to push the project into July and August when the research team have had holidays booked, resulting in further delays and exacerbated by our main programmer being on paternity leave for a month.

None of these were seen as insurmountable problems, and the funding deadline has not prevented the project from continuing until it is felt enough evidence has been gathered to take this forwards.

The Revised Plan

Throughout this project the approach taken has had to adapt to circumstances but also to the knowledge gained through the conversations had with those SMEs, procurers and industry bodies that have been involved. The platform now being developed reflects these exchanges and the feedback received about the demonstrators used to show the approach being taken.

The platform itself has been honed, and now exists in a form that can be used to demonstrate the process to a wider audience together with a user manual and video explaining how to engage with it. It is the need to get that support from a wider audience than just the SMEs this was initially being marketed to that has changed the focus of this feasibility study:

- The workshops aimed solely at SMEs were replaced by questionnaires
- The SME questionnaire was then adapted to create a version for procurers to get their feedback
- The Powerpoint presentations developed to explain the benefits to both the SMEs and the Procurers was then extended to include a version for the Industry Bodies and a fourth for EMCCA. (Appendix viii)

The functionality of the platform can currently be demonstrated in its component parts:

- The way in which SMEs gain access to the signposting site via their membership body and then from there to the appropriate sites holding the information being sought.
- The business model incorporating the Industry Body entry points and how they have been categorised by their supporting roles
- The questionnaire used to filter the information provided to the SMEs on arrival at the signposting site and also inform the aggregation process
- The aggregation of capabilities carried out behind the scenes to create collaborative bid suggestions for SMEs and procurers to work with.

The next step of bringing this all together as a fully functioning site is beyond the scope of this project. That requires further programming and web development, and for the many in-principle agreements made with the Industry Bodies to be advanced through contractual agreements, which are dependent on there being a commitment from EMCCA to support the process as part of a broader strategy of inclusive growth.

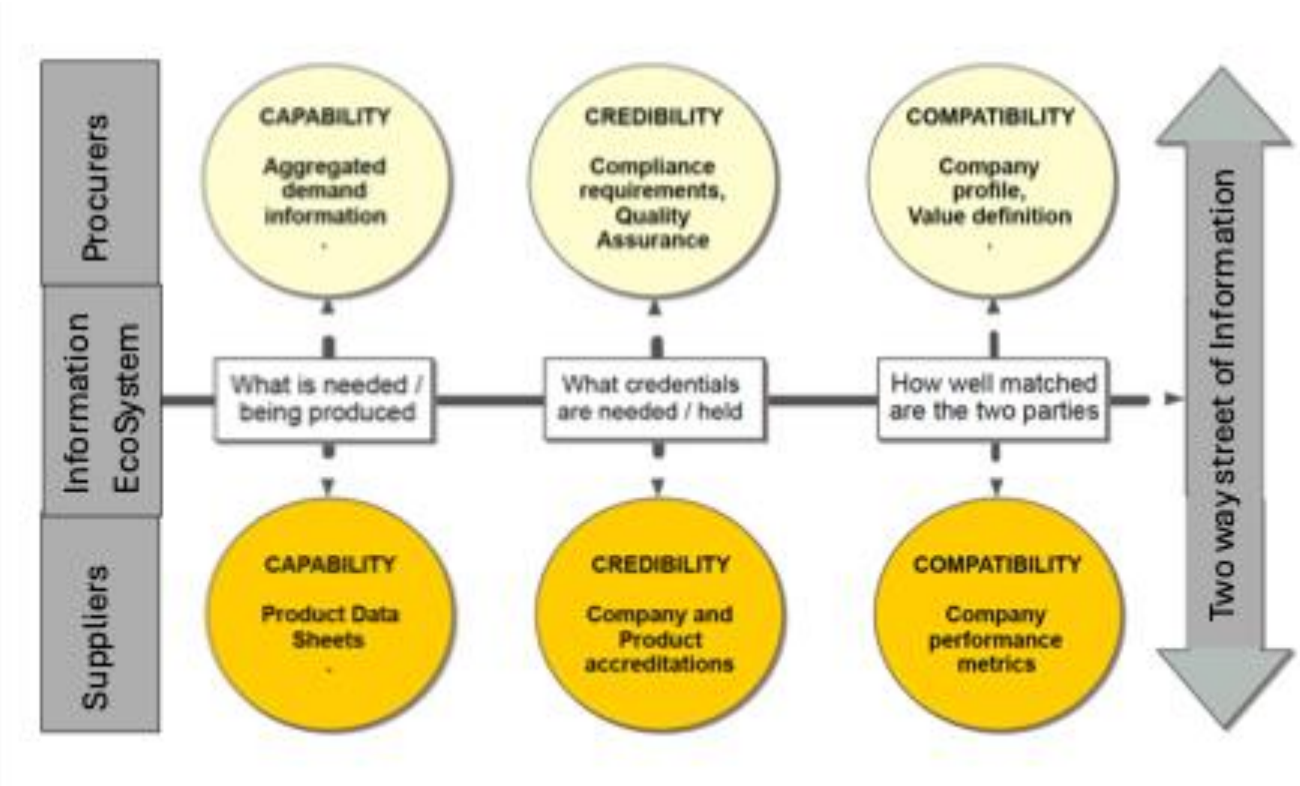
The main outcome was always to prove the concept, in terms of:

- the need for such a solution,
- the appropriateness of the solution being proposed in addressing the barriers to be overcome,
- the technical feasibility of the approach being developed
- and the financial viability of the business model being used.

These objectives have been achieved, and the next phase, when funded, will trial the platform and allow for a network economy to grow organically and self-populate the system with data on our SME resource.

The main resource here is the AI driven **Procurement and Framework Opportunities** site which is central to the platform and forms the bridge between the SMEs and the Procurers, with the other signposting being to 3rd Party sites offering support in all the areas covered above, and helping SMEs become ‘bid ready’. Together this provides the one-stop-shop facility that will give SMEs the confidence and the ability to engage with the procurement process.

Engaging with that process may still be too onerous for many SMEs without partnering with a 'broker' who can guide them through the many requirements being asked of them. These brokers exist in various forms and are effectively just another collaborative partner, but one that 'oversees' the process for one or more SMEs whose time is better spent delivering the product or services required.



What the platform does do to reduce that up-front demand, is to break it down into three stages, with each stage requiring input from both the supplier and the procurer at the level needed to progress the relationship.

The initial stage is therefore limited to basic public domain information about where a business is, what it does and its capacity to deliver. In return this is matched with information about size and scope of the market being offered.

The information about compliance and what accreditations and levels of insurance would be needed must still be known at the outset but not necessarily be provided or be in place until there is a genuine prospect of a contract being signed. It certainly should not be a barrier to entering the bidding process, as this is what invariably prevents SMEs from even applying. Often these aspects can be covered though a collaborative relationship between two SMEs with one subcontracting to the other.

This approach allows for discussions to be held between procurers and prospective bidders prior to the onerous form filling that would usually prevent that stage ever being reached. Whether or not two companies can work successfully together is as much to do with personalities and having a similar company ethos as it has to do with compliance with regulatory requirements.

Project Outcomes

The evidence gathered showing the need for this project has been one of its main outcomes, but that show of support has come through a co-creative process that has seen the platform evolve in response to the feedback received and the knowledge gained.

The need for such a solution:

- SMEs: Evidence remains anecdotal and qualitative at best. To obtain statistical evidence to back this up requires a level of engagement that has not been possible to achieve, but there has been little variance in the feedback that has been gathered on the barriers to be overcome (Appendix ix)
- Procurers: The three sectors focused on were our four main local authorities, and in the private sector, the tier one businesses in the region, and our three universities. These represent the most influential parties in the industry's supply chain and the most important voices in any attempt to implement a change agenda (Appendix x)
- Industry Bodies: A taxonomy of industry bodies was developed to categorise the many businesses supporting the construction industry and used to test the principle of the business model being proposed. From each of these a selection of businesses were contacted and the concept discussed. Those businesses were then used to help reach their SME members with the questionnaire to increase our response rate (Appendix xi)
- EMCCA: Through multiple attempts to reach the decision makers and get the level of endorsement needed to give this fact-finding exercise greater credibility, the project now has visibility across many divisions up to the Mayor. Concerns about duplication have been raised but no evidence of anything similar being developed or in existence, paving the way for this to be fully supported as a vehicle for delivering inclusive growth across the region (Appendix xii)

The appropriateness of the solution being proposed in addressing the barriers to be overcome:

The approach being taken has been challenged on a number of fronts, all of which have been successfully defended:

- Replication of existing support mechanisms – There are three reasons why this has been designed as a signposting service: Replicating existing sources of information is both wasteful, time consuming and adds to the industry's confusion over which resource to use; it creates barriers to adoption through unnecessary competition; and it requires continuous input to maintain and keep the content current.
- The cost of sustaining such a platform – the business model has been devised as a way to spread the cost of keeping the signposting current across multiple industry bodies. The percentage of the supporting industry bodies' membership fees taken is dynamic and calculated from the number of members , the number of participating bodies and each site's user figures. (Appendix ??)

- The problem of SME engagement – the research into why SMEs do not engage with the procurement process was part of the prior research that informed the development of the platform. If all those barriers can be removed, there will be a measurable change in participation levels. If only some are removed, those that remain will mean nothing changes. This is why such a holistic approach that deals with the issues from all perspectives is needed.

The technical viability of the approach being developed:

Having a robust technical platform that is both sustainable and scalable is critical to the long term success of projects such as this. There are many aspects to this to be considered, including GDPR and trust at a more fundamental level that the data being provided by SMEs will be secure. The approach taken to the platform's development originates from the initial research into the barriers to engagement, one of which was that reluctance to share often sensitive data, even on a secure site. The solution to this was either to develop higher levels of data encryption, or the solution adopted that limited the data held in the cloud to that data already in the public domain. The three steps of Capability, Credibility and Compatibility allows for a staged engagement based on a mutual agreement to share detailed information beyond that initial level only when it becomes necessary to do so. That information can therefore remain on the company's system where it can be maintained, updated, and send directly to the prospective client when requested. (Appendix xiii) This approach has multiple benefits:

- It gains the trust of the SMEs that need to be engaged in the process
- It reduces the burden on SMEs of gathering and submitting data up front
- It reduces the ongoing costs of maintenance and upkeep of the data being held
- It reduces the platform's security and GDPR requirements

The financial viability of the business model being used:

There will need to be further evidence of the viability of this model, but those industry bodies involved so far have all agreed that the business model represents a mutually beneficial solution to a known problem. The mechanism for calculating the percentage of the fee paid for being a portal to the site and the actual total income required to maintain it going forwards have yet to be agreed, but the figures needed for calculating this are known:

- Annual cost for maintaining the site: £50k?
- Number of businesses in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire: 95 000
- Number of key Industry Support Bodies who could be participants: 25?
- Number of companies paying membership fees in the region per industry body: 1000?
- Membership fee values: £200?
- Percentage of fee seen as viable: 1%

On these estimates the model works.

New Knowledge

The different schools within NTU who have been part of this project have treated it differently. ADBE, for their part have defined this as consultancy for Bolsover DC and focused on gathering knowledge about their SME skills base, and raising awareness amongst them of the procurement process and how to make better use of it. CBIT on the other hand, have defined their input as contract research and have used the data and feedback provided from the questionnaires and meetings held with industry partners to further develop their platform to address the issues being raised.

The intention is for the platform developed to be trialled amongst the range of people who have been involved in various sectors to get further feedback from them about how well the solution being developed resolves those issues. This form of co-creation, with all perspectives considered, not just at the outset but throughout the design process and at the implementation stage, results in solutions that are robust and far more likely to be adopted voluntarily without the need for incentives or regulatory requirements driving them.

In that respect, this project is seen as one that not only addresses the problems of low SME engagement but also the underlying problems around the low impact levels experienced by government backed strategies aimed at 'transforming the construction industry'. A failure to fully understand the implications of an initiative from the perspective of those sectors that must be on board for it to succeed often lies behind these low levels of engagement, and this can only be tackled by including those sectors from the outset, no matter how difficult that is to achieve.

To that end, this project has the potential to increase the impact of many projects across all sectors of industry where similar issues around engagement with their supply chains exist.

Benchmarking

One important message that was fed back from SMEs was the need for an immediate payback of some kind to ensure engagement with any proposed intervention. The possibility of some collective benefit at some later date is not enough to justify the up-front use of limited time and resources. Being able to benchmark yourself against other businesses in your sector however, if done anonymously, offers an attractive and immediate payback for entering data and engaging with a process.

This has been taken on board, not only because of its value as an incentive, but because of how it also helps the aggregation process. SMEs want to know how they're fairing in comparison to other businesses, but also how close they are to having all the necessary capabilities and accreditations needed to bid for a project. This platform can provide all this information, but also use it internally to suggest possible collaborations to 'fill in the gaps' as an alternative to gaining the necessary accreditations or levels of insurance themselves.

The other reality that has been realised through this research is the need for agility in responding to these bids. This platform can immediately provide the best collaborative options available saving valuable time, but can also allow companies to provide their own collaborative partnerships and ask for all projects that they could bid for together to be highlighted as they are posted.

Next Steps

The intention is for this trial to be extended both geographically across the East Midlands and 'sectorially' to include all SME supply chains. The similarities between the construction industry and other sectors is not yet fully understood, and it could be that the issues being confronted within this sector are atypical and more pronounced than elsewhere. Neither is it fully understood yet how regional our supply chains could beneficially be before imposing an unnecessary constraint on the procurement process or even face legal challenges.

One market sector closer to home that has been successfully trialled is interdisciplinary academic research itself. Similar problems are encountered in this 'industry' where it is difficult to find the most appropriate collaborators for projects that need a quick response, whilst many researchers are wary about sharing too much information about their own research on-line for fear of it being used by other competing researchers to bid for the same funding.

Leaving that opportunity aside, however, the next step for this demonstrator would be to launch the platform and grow its scope organically starting with the sector where the most need and therefore the most benefit can be seen to exist. That is another question that has been asked of the construction industry and the feedback received will help decide what the most fertile sector would be. One candidate would be the retrofit sector, where there is a need for multiple trades with local knowledge of the methods of construction used, and where overheads need to be kept to a minimum to ensure profitability.

Whether or not this platform then grows to encompass other sectors, the organic business model and the benefit to those parties who do participate are still valid. This is a scalable concept, and once the platform has been developed, its maintenance costs and the fees to fund that will be proportional to its growth. The real challenge will be to get the platform recognised at a regional level as a project with governmental support for growing our regional economy.

There is still more work to be done at that level with both business and a government taking a very risk averse attitude towards collaborative initiatives that have not got a good track record for successful long term outcomes. Our thesis is that the undeniably poor track record of these government initiatives, certainly across the construction sector, is due to the lack of engagement with over 50% of our workforce, and the consequent lack of relevance these initiatives have had from their perspective. Growing confidence is key to overcoming this wariness, and consistency of messaging and consistency in the policies behind the messaging are where this needs to start, with a secure business model being the first step to achieving this by removing the reliance on government funding.

Appendices

Appendix i: ONS data on SMEs

The construction sector is both a backbone and a barometer of the UK's SME economy. At the start of 2024 the UK's private-sector business population was estimated at about **5.499 million** businesses with construction accounting for a large proportion of that. Construction firms are unusually numerous relative to their workforce contribution with the sector containing a high proportion of sole traders and small firms with many self-employed tradespeople and small subcontractors. Whilst this boosts the number of enterprises, it means those firms are often light on payroll headcount. Using the official headline that construction accounted for about 16% of all UK businesses, this translates into roughly **880 000** construction businesses at the start of 2024.

Employment patterns underline the same point. Official ONS analysis and associated industry reporting show the construction sector represented roughly **6% of total UK employment** in early 2024, even while it accounted for a much larger slice of the nation's enterprise count — reflecting the sector's substantial share of self-employment and micro-businesses. Broader workforce estimates used by industry bodies put the construction-sector workforce in the range of **~2.6 million** people in 2024 (this total typically includes employees plus the sizeable self-employed cohort). Those twin facts — a high count of small firms and a moderate share of employment — help explain why policy interventions for construction SMEs tend to focus on cash-flow, late payments, and skills/apprenticeship pipelines rather than simply firm creation.

The problems arise around communicating these interventions to multiple small businesses who need to engage with the policies being promoted. SMEs with under 50 employees make up over **95%** of all private sector businesses, but around **75%** are non-employing businesses employing no one at all, making for a difficult market to influence unless ways can be found to do this collectively through industry bodies that understand their specific roles within the industry.

ONS data also shows differences across sectors that need to be understood to make sure the messaging is appropriate and relevant. Total annual construction output rose slightly in 2024 (the ONS reported an increase of **0.4% year-on-year** for total construction output in 2024 compared with 2023), but that headline conceals a divergence between **repair & maintenance (R&M)** including retrofit, which rose strongly — and **new work** (particularly new housing and some infrastructure sub-segments), which contracted. On a quarterly basis the sector showed modest positive momentum at times (for example, construction output grew by about **0.5%** in Quarter 4 2024). These dynamics matter for SMEs because R&M work tends to support many small local firms and subcontractors, whereas contractions in new housing and big civil projects affect larger contractors and upstream supply chains.

They also matter for working out where to focus this project to ensure it can become established with a good foothold before building out into other sectors. The repair, maintenance and retrofit sector is where most SMEs make their living and is therefore where the need for a support network to help build collaborations is strongest.

Appendix ii: EMCCA's Strategic Plan

EMCCA Strategic Plan: Key Elements & Objectives

1. **Devolution deal & investment**
   - EMCCA was created through devolution (covering Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire) and has secured a funding deal of **£1.14 billion over 30 years**, plus £1.5 billion in transport funding. join-emcca.com
   - EMCCA is directing over **£4 billion of public investment** in the region over the decades ahead to deliver its growth, skills, housing, transport, environmental, and economic development priorities. East Midlands Combined Authority
2. **Inclusive Growth Commission**
   - A commission (RSA-led) has been formed to ensure that growth in the region is inclusive. It aims to produce a roadmap so that economic growth benefits all parts of society and place, not just major urban centres. East Midlands Combined Authority,
   - The commission's interim report (March 2025) sets out a number of emerging findings: the need for better job quality and security; bridging skills gaps; tackling health, equality, housing, and transport barriers; and increasing devolved powers and flexibilities. East Midlands Combined Authority
3. **Investment Zone strategy**
   - The East Midlands Investment Zone (EMIZ) has been established, with a **£160 million** ten-year programme. It aims to unlock inclusive growth and innovation, especially in **advanced manufacturing**, **clean energy**, and **advanced construction industries**. East Midlands Combined Authority, East Midlands Business Link
   - Priority sites include Infinity Park (Derby), Explore Park (Worksop), and Hartington Staveley (Chesterfield) – these will benefit from targeted incentives such as tax breaks, business rate retention, and support for infrastructure. East Midlands Combined Authority
4. **Housing, Transport, Skills, Net Zero**
   - EMCCA strategy includes building 52,000 homes, improving housing quality (including retrofits and higher environmental standards), and making sure housing is affordable. East Midlands Combined Authority
   - Transport improvements: better roads, public transport, connectivity, both physical and digital. East Midlands Combined Authority

- Skills development is central: aligning skills with employer needs, increasing technical & green skills, adult education, apprenticeships, upskilling/reskilling. East Midlands Combined Authority
- Net Zero: aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050; emphasis on low-carbon homes, retrofits, renewable energy, protecting green spaces. East Midlands Combined Authority

5. **Shared priorities with central Government**
    - The region has secured backing for shared growth priorities: Innovation, Skills, etc. The priority is to strengthen links between business, universities, research; improve technology adoption; and build clear paths into key sectors. East Midlands CA

What This Means for the Construction Industry & Regional SMEs

Based on the above, here are the likely implications, opportunities, and challenges for construction firms and small and medium businesses in the East Midlands.

Opportunities

1. **Growth in demand for housing & retrofits**
    - The push for affordable high-quality homes and retrofitting existing homes for energy efficiency will create demand. SMEs in construction, especially in trades like insulation, heating, roofing, windows, sustainable materials, etc., are likely to benefit. East Midlands Combined Authority
2. **Advanced construction & clean building technologies**
    - The Investment Zone explicitly includes “advanced construction industries” among its priority sectors. That suggests incentives, R&D support, technology adoption, possibly prefabrication, offsite construction, greener materials or methods will be encouraged. SMEs that can adapt toward higher tech, sustainable construction methods may get access to grants, contracts, collaborations. East Midlands Combined Authority
3. **Infrastructure & connectivity projects**
    - Transport improvements and infrastructure investment will require construction activity. Roadworks, public transport upgrades, new transport nodes, possibly active travel etc. These will open up contracts for local SMEs. East Midlands Combined Authority
4. **Business support & incentives**
    - There will be business support designed specifically for SMEs in priority sectors. Financial incentives via the Investment Zone (tax, business rate retention), and support for innovation and collaboration with research institutions. East Midlands CA
5. **Skills & workforce development**

- SMEs often struggle with accessing skilled labour. The EMCCA's focus on aligning skills, apprenticeships, upskilling means SMEs may have better access to training, grants or subsidies for labour, opportunities to collaborate with colleges. This helps to reduce one of the major constraints. East Midlands Combined Authority

6. **Net-Zero and regulatory environment**
    - As sustainability standards become stricter, there will be a growing market for low carbon construction, energy efficiency, renewable technology integration. SMEs that invest in green credentials, reuse, or sustainable methods are likely to have competitive advantage. EMCCA's plan supports this shift. East Midlands Combined Authority

Challenges & Risks

1. **Capacity and cost pressures**
    - Many SMEs may lack the scale or capital to invest in new technologies, upskill staff, or meet higher environmental standards without support. Material costs, labour shortages, inflation will all be pressures. If they can't access finance or business support quickly, they risk being left behind.
2. **Competition for contracts & supply chain issues**
    - As EMCCA and central government draw in large investment – advanced manufacturing, new zones, etc. – there may be competition from larger firms. SMEs must ensure they are capable of meeting procurement requirements (skills, quality, sustainability) to win contracts. Supply chain disruptions or lack of local suppliers for specialized green technologies or materials could squeeze SMEs.
3. **Regulation & compliance burdens**
    - New standards for housing, retrofit, energy efficiency, carbon zero etc. bring extra compliance, possibly licensing or certification costs. For SMEs, that can be disproportionately burdensome, especially if information is not well distributed.
4. **Spatial/geographical inequalities**
    - While regional strategy aims to uplift all places, some towns/rural areas may have less infrastructure, skills access, or transport connectivity. SMEs in those areas may struggle more than those in better connected urban centres to access contracts, workforce, or customers. Thus the success of the regional plan depends on whether connectivity (transport, digital) and localised support are effective.
5. **Timescales & uncertainty**
    - Some of the strategy is long-term (i.e. 10-30 years), or at the stage of planning, commission interim findings, etc. SMEs need clearer timelines so they can plan investment, hiring, training. Uncertainty in funding, planning permissions, regulatory changes can delay projects or make them risky for smaller firms.

Appendix iii: The Questionnaires

Four versions of the questionnaire were used to gather data from SMEs and Procurers, one for all sectors and one specifically for the construction sector. These were sent out through various routes and embedded in PowerPoint presentations (Appendix viii) that were again customised for different audiences, with one for SMEs, one for Procurers, one for the supporting Industry Bodies and a fourth for EMCCA to try to gain their support for the project early on.

These questionnaires are still being circulated and the results processed to build up a more accurate picture of what the industry needs to help it function more collaboratively.

The Procurement Process: The SMEs' perspective (2)

We have a new Combined Authority for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, EMCCA (East Midlands Combined County Authority).

Their aim is to grow our regional economy, and they have funding and devolved powers from central government to make that happen. This involves encouraging inward investment, but more importantly, it means making better use of the resource and capabilities already available in the region, and enhancing our local SMEs' potential to capitalise on local procurement opportunities.

Shortening and simplifying our supply chains is key to this, which essentially means making the procurement process easier and more accessible for our small businesses. The new Procurement Act came into force in March 2025 and its aim was to mitigate these barriers to engagement, but some still remain and this project aims to address these locally using EMCCA's devolved powers.

But first we need to understand precisely what those barriers are. This project has been set up to get that information directly from small businesses and also gather opinions on whether what we're proposing to do will improve engagement with the procurement process.

The following questionnaire is based on evidence already gathered but we need to gauge how many of you agree with these comments and whether you have anything else to add that we can work with. The information you provide will remain anonymous, and the project itself fully complies with GDPR requirements for data storage.

Section 1 ...

Your Profile

Before we take you to the Central Signposting Portal, we need to know more about your business so we can filter the sites you'll be shown and make sure they're all relevant to your sector. Nothing on this site is held here - this is just a point of reference for everything you need to know, and if there's anything missing, tell us and we'll make sure it gets added. This is a resource that has been developed by the East Midlands Combined County Authority (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire) to help us make better use of our regional skills base and grow our regional economy. It is financed by 1% of your membership fees to the Industry Body you used to enter the site from. The more it is used, the more beneficial it will become, for SMEs, for Procurers and for the East Midlands.
The following questions are under three headings of:
Capability - what you do and where you do it
Credibility - what accreditations and insurance you have
Compatibility - where you fit and how you operate

Nothing we ask for is seen to be sensitive information, but only give answers you feel comfortable sharing.

When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

EAST MIDLANDS INVESTMENT ZONE SPRINT

Various routes have been used to get the feedback needed, all of which have met with limited response due to the nature of asking SMEs to participate in initiatives that offer little in return beyond the 'promise' of future, often collective benefits.

We have nevertheless persevered through a number of events where we have 'piggybacked' off other organisations workshops or seminars, including the following:

ADBE Green Construction Workshop

Nottingham Business School, NTU 05/02/2025

EMCCA Summer Engagement Event

Cleaver and Wake, 24/07/2025

NZIP Retrofit workshops and quarterly networking lunches for regional SMEs

NZIP launch event, Post Mill Centre, South Normanton, 17/06/2025

Networking Lunch, Alleppey Kitchen, Bolsover, 23/09/2025

East Midland Chamber events

Retrofit Green Skills - Employer Forum, University of Derby, 17/09/2025

Retrofit Green Skills - Employer Forum, Nottingham Trent University, 25/11/2025

Enterprise Clowne Detox Breakfast for businesses in the Bolsover District

Tangent Business Hub, Shirebrook, 10/09/2025

BEM Services, M&E Consultants and Design Engineers Networking Lunch

Revolution De Cuba, Nottingham 02/10/2015

This is an ongoing exercise as we expand our research both geographically and 'sectorally', with each event reaching not only those present but all that organisations members through their mailing lists.

Appendix iv: The barriers to engagement

CIH (Construction Innovation Hub) Platform Programme - Supply Chain Strategy:

The following report was from the research carried out for the CIH in 2021/2 looking at how to engage Supply Chain SMEs in the Platform Design and Value Toolkit programmes that were running concurrently. The findings from the interviews carried out with participating SMEs helped inform the implementation programme and also form the basis of this project's approach to encouraging participation and collaboration.

Value Workstream Brief:

1. Supplier / Project team gap analysis for PCS – identifying areas within the sub-assembly categories that require addressing, including identification and recommendation of solutions (including but not limited to new partner identification and introduction).

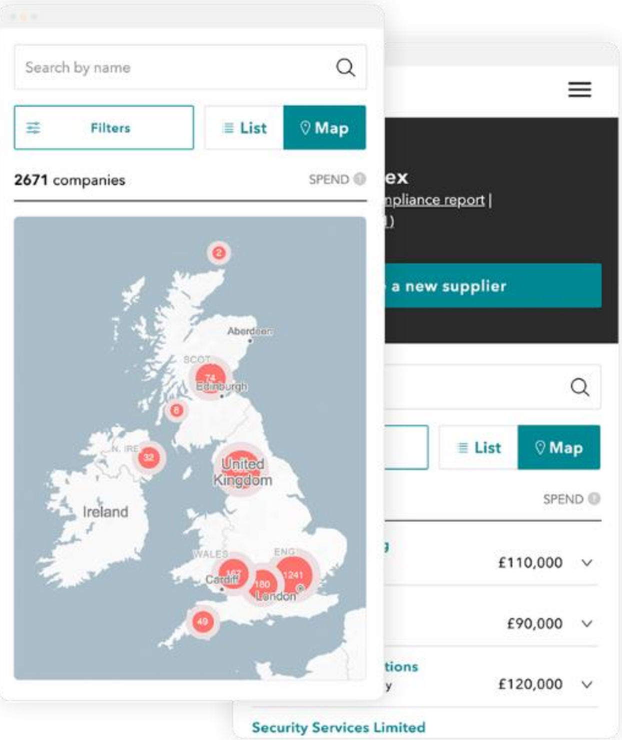
2. Sub-assembly capability / maturity assessment – to inform the above exercise

Challenges / Requirements

- Visualise the extent of the supply chain and make it easy to find, source and work with suppliers who can contribute to the definition of the Platform Construction System (PCS).
- Defining capability requirements of the supply chain to deliver a PCS and assessing which suppliers can meet those needs or where gaps exist;
- Identify a potential supplier ecosystem for Platform Construction System (PCS) – Proof of Concept building to enable / inform procurement strategy.
- Linking the kit of parts and system concepting outputs with broader supplier ecosystem and demonstrate size of market who could deliver a Platform approach.
- Understand capacity of supplier ecosystem to deliver government pipeline using PCS, identifying shortfalls / critical items and approaches to balancing demand.
- Demonstrate to government departments the broad supplier ecosystem for a Platform approach and alignment with government procurement objectives for SME and local targets (reflecting new social value PPN 06/20)

Approach

The team will deploy a digital platform to collate and report data on potential supplier ecosystem for the Platform Construction System. The platform will capture company profiles, map locations, assess capability and report on the supplier networks, aligned with the 'Kit of Parts and Kit of Rules' for the PCS, to enable the Hub to assess and fill existing Programme gaps, as well as reviewing the broader supplier market for adopting a platform approach.



The high-level steps would include:

1 Integrate database + map of suppliers

2 Supplier Capability Criteria

3 Link Kit of Parts / Rules to supplier ecosystem

4 Gap Analysis

5 Engagement & Onboarding

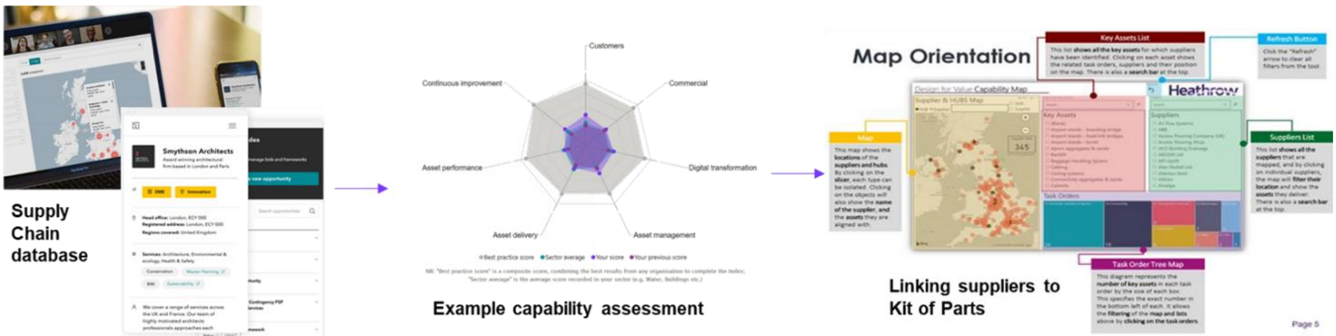
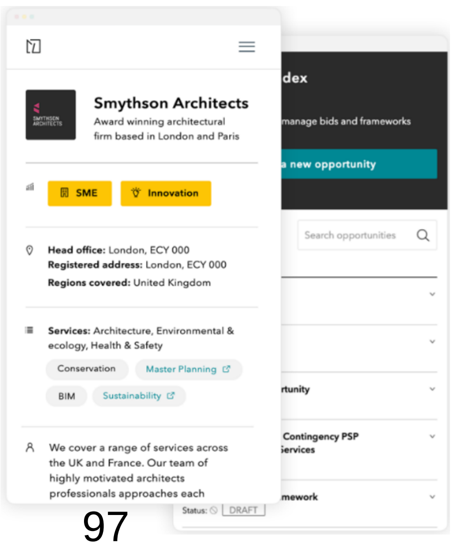


Figure 3 – Example of the *mapping and searchable locations of all Innovate UK*



IAND platform, *with integrated supplier directory, showing the funded suppliers.*

This enables the team to ecosystem via imports from a full searchable map and (including info. on services / to undertake and capture reviews.

identify the wider supplier existing supplier directories to give directory of potential suppliers location and size). This can be used data on the initial assessments and

The output will be published PowerBI) made accessible to

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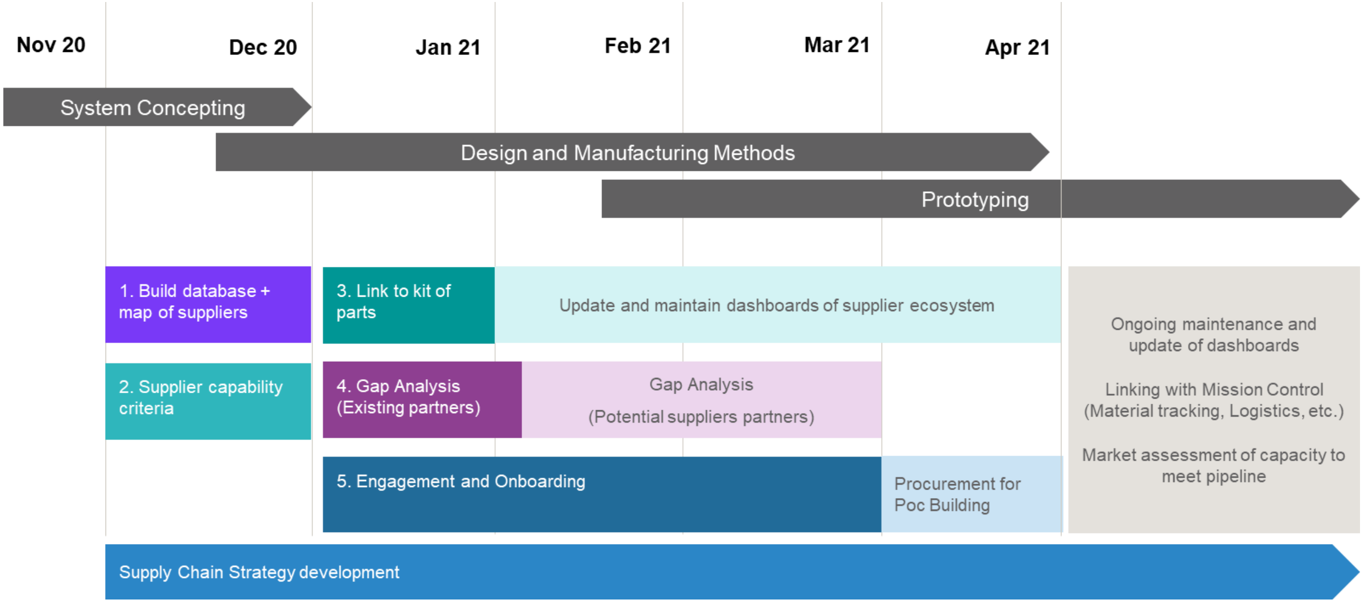
as interactive dashboards (e.g. the Hub and Industry partners to inform decision-making. The initial focus is to support the backfilling of existing gaps in Programme, as well as subsequent selection and procurement of the supply chain for the Proof of Concept Building. An indicative programme for this initial phase is shown below:



The outputs from the initial mapping exercise will feed into and inform the Supply Chain Strategy for an Industry Platform. The strategy will be developed through research and engagement with Hub Industry Partners and other sectors (e.g. manufacturing, retail, food and pharmaceutical industries) to gather best practice and align to Construction sector. The data and reporting can be linked into other aspects of the programme, including:

- **Supplier Capacity** – Assessing supply chain ability to deliver government pipeline
- **Procurement strategy** – Picking right supply chain, including approach to pre-qualification and selection
- **Value toolkit** – Including delivery model selection and Commercial Strategy development
- **Mission Control** – Tracking and monitoring procurement, manufacturing process and logistics.
- **Digital Configurator** – Integration of supply chain options into design options

Activities	**Build database and map suppliers:** A. Create instance of platform (https://www.iand.com/) B. Capture and load company profiles of existing Industry Partners (using publicly available data) C. Connect and integrate with existing supplier databases from MTC / Integrators e.g. Kier MMC database

D. Search and gather company profiles for MMC related products using publicly available lists e.g. client frameworks, Innovate UK data etc.

E. Publish mapping of supplier ecosystem, including basic company information e.g. Sector, Size, Services, experience, trade associations, market position etc.

Develop Supplier Capability Assessment Criteria

F. Engagement with Integrators to develop supplier capability requirements and set of criteria needed to support Programme delivery

G. Integrate into Capability Assessment tool, potentially including two levels of assessment e.g. Initial filtering of potential suppliers, followed by PQQ style questionnaire with supplementary capability assessment criteria to inform selection.

Link Kit of Parts to supplier ecosystem

H. Engage with designers and sub-assembly team clusters to identify current gaps for system concepting option development. Create list of potential suppliers using supplier map and existing integrator databases.

I. Capture outputs from Define the Need and System Concepting and Kit of parts definition in structured format e.g. Spaces definition, Product Breakdown Structures / Product Design Requirements / Preliminary Bill of Materials

J. Link kit of parts (components / assemblies) to supplier services defined in company profiles. Create dashboards with a range of filters to enable data to be viewed in variety of ways: role, space, component / assembly types etc.

Gap Analysis

K. Undertake an initial assessment of current industry partners using capability framework to identify gaps. Visualise capability scoring through dashboards and highlight gaps to Hub and Programme team.

L. Identify immediate capability gaps to be backfilled for Programme delivery e.g. Design support for sub-assemblies

M. Widen assessment to broader supplier ecosystem to identify potential new suppliers who could be added to Programme, as an initial filtering process. Develop long list of potential suppliers to engage.

N. Agree potential supplier list and issue engagement pack + PQQ assessment criteria. Identify, score and select potential suppliers to onboard into Programme.

Note: information captured would support Social Value requirements from PPN 06/20. A new set of government metrics has recently been published that could be monitored

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/939694/The_social_value_model.pdf

Engagement and Onboarding

O. Validate supplier selection with Hub and engage with Procurement Strategy team to finalise selection;

P. Develop a supplier registration and approval process for PCS;

Q. Develop onboarding and training pack for new suppliers;

Ongoing Maintenance and Support

A. Maintain and update supplier lists and profiles, refreshing data periodically.

B. Maintain and update kit of parts, refreshing a detailed components are defined through design process

C. Capture the value of products provided to the demonstrator, to evidence value delivered to programme

D. Monitor engagement level of suppliers on the programme

E. Understand how data can be published and made open source so it can be utilised by Government departments to support selection of supply chains

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Assessing capacity of supplier ecosystem to support Platform Approach:

A. Understanding proportion of the market that is engaged in PCS or who could potentially supply components / assemblies defined as part of the System Concept;
B. Determine Production volume: how much of a particular product (or at least a range) will be required of the course of a pipeline will be key to supplier interest in the programme e.g. 30 schools over 3 years requiring 2000 external wall panels;
C. Programme readiness – once the database is developed it will be important to identify (either through scoring or some other metric) the supplier readiness to deliver – getting onto the supply chain database and subsequently being rated: “ready for integration” will not only gauge the level of interest but could create some healthy competition.
D. Review capacity of the supply chain to meet government building pipeline and consider implications on government depart procurement strategies / rules

Supply Chain Strategy Development:

A. Understanding what good looks like in Supply Chain Design – Traditional and MMC
B. Research of best practice across sectors (manufacturing, retail, food, pharmaceutical etc.) and compare to construction
C. Collaboratively develop Platform Supply Chain approach
D. Develop future state roadmap, linked to National infrastructure strategy and construction playbook.

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Outputs

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• Supply chain capability Framework / Assessment criteria
• Supply chain map and company profiles
• Dashboards – Linking the Kit of Parts to the Supplier ecosystem and summarising outputs of the capability assessment
• Inputs into the Procurement Strategy
• Inputs into Mission Control

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	• Inputs into Digital Configurator
Inputs Required	• PCS definition (Components / assemblies) + specifications • Integrator supplier databases (Kier / Skanska / BAM / Mace / Mid-Group / PCE) e.g. https://www.kier.co.uk/mmc-database/ • Development of supplier assessment criteria in collaboration with Industry Partners • Supplier on-boarding and engagement process / collateral • Procurement Strategy • Value Toolkit
Team	• Massi Crea – Mid-Group (Lead) • Nigel Goddard / Rosie Bullock – MMDV (Engagement + dashboards) • Adam Golden – MM APD • Elspeth Finch - IAND platform • Mike Siebert – Ecologic Homes Consultancy
Duration	Initial development phase – 3-4 months Ongoing maintenance – 12 - 18 months (To end of Programme)
Cost	Include inputs for others - Headline budget
Resourcing (People, Time and Tools)	
Value	
Risk Mitigation	

Appendix v: Procurement and SME Engagement across EMCCA

The prevailing construction procurement environment is built around traditional procurement norms and systems (design-bid-build, or design-build arrangements, amended standard forms, collateral warranties, fragmented insurance requirements), that rely on a single main contractor as the integrator. These procurement norms are driven by structural factors (see Table 1) that have been sustained by coercive (formal mandates, regulations, and political influence), mimetic (organisations imitating successful peers or adopting popular practices), and normative pressures (professional networks, and societal expectations) (Sarhan et al., 2018). This has made it difficult for construction clients to bypass Tier-1 contractors without appearing to deviate from what is currently accepted as procurement best practice.

Structural factors	**Effects**
Institutional norms and safeguarding	Locks in Tier-1 as default integrator
Risk transfer logic	Clients outsource integration to Tier-1
Commercial actor influence and professional practices	Reinforces single-point responsibility
Hierarchical structure	Concentrates power at Tier-1 making direct client-SME seem like a higher coordination risk
Capability gap	Clients depend on Tier-1 supply chain management systems, hence loosing capability over time
Payment control	Tier-1 dominates cash flow and leverages on this
Cultural lock-in	Repeat business sustains Tier-1 dominance

Table 1: Structural factors sustaining current procurement paradigm and their effects

The safeguarding logic remains entrenched in the current procurement regime (amended standard forms, exculpatory clauses, disclaimers, layered collateral warranties, fragmented insurances), reinforcing the role of Tier-1 contractors as the primary risk buffer (Sarhan et al., 2017). Clients perceive that outsourcing integration to a main contractor will reduce their coordination burden and exposure to liability. **Tier-1 contractors exploit this by positioning themselves as the risk managers**, **charging premiums for risk transfer and governance** (Sarhan et al., 2017). This creates a structural dependency because over time, many public sector clients now lack the internal capability to manage multiple trade interfaces, so they default to Tier-1 intermediaries. Large tier-1 contractors now have dedicated supply chain management (SCM) teams, ICT systems (intranets/extranets), category management protocols (tiered preferred/strategic lists), supplier audits, and performance KPIs (Manu & Knight, 2019), all sustained through the clients' payments for main contractor overheads. Some clients lack an equivalent internal SCM capability, and default to relying on the Tier-1 contractors for supply chain audits and prequalification, performance monitoring and KPI systems and coordination of multiple trades and logistics. This capability gap has entrenched Tier-1 contractor dominance. Tier-1 contractors also control payment flows to lower tiers, using retention and delayed payments as a leverage (Manu et al., 2015). This financial control reinforces their power position and dependency of SMEs on Tier-1 relationships for continuity of work.

Quantity Surveyors (QSs), cost consultants, and legal advisors, who are key influencers in procurement, especially regarding the necessary contractual safeguards, are trained and incentivised around a price-and-control paradigm. Their advice tends to favour single-point responsibility, due-diligence routines, and bureaucratic assurance, which, unintentionally, re-centralise Tier-1 authority and crowd out direct collaborative value creation with specialist trades (Ahmed et al., 2021) as a strategy of minimising perceived legal and reputational risk. Their remuneration models (fee-for-service, claims management) align with transactional governance, not integrated supply chain engagement. This reinforces a hierarchical Client-Tier 1(main contractor)-Tier 2 (sub-contractor)-Tier 3 (sub-sub-contractor) supply chain, with power concentrated at the top (Ahmed et al., 2021). Lower-tier specialists, who are largely SMEs remain disconnected from early design and decision-making, limiting their ability to influence value and innovation. This hierarchy is reinforced by custom and practice, making Tier-1 contractors' gatekeepers of work allocation and information flow.

Tier-1 contractors control payment flows (valuations, retentions, payment timing), building leverage over SMEs and sustaining a Tier-1 driven procurement ecosystem. Payment uncertainty (late payments, non-release of retention sums when due) undermines lower-tier trust, pushing specialists to prioritise the Tier-1 relationships over direct client engagement (Manu et al., 2015). Trust formation in the supply chain therefore becomes benefit-induced rather than trustworthiness-induced (Manu et al., 2015; 2016). Long-standing procurement and supply chain networks that emerge from this system create dependence on Tier-1 based models, reproducing waste and disincentivising alternatives despite notable failures and narratives of reform away from this system (Sarhan et al., 2018; 2017). The heavy focus on safeguards inflates transaction costs and stifles flow efficiencies (Sarhan et al., 2017; 2018). Clients get a perceived comfort with Tier-1 single-point responsibility, but at a higher cost that does not necessarily translate into value. This has resulted in Tier-1 selection being the default, with weak incentives to engage trades directly (Sarhan et al., 2017). The trust deficits between main contractors and subcontractors translate into higher transaction costs, opportunism, and lower collaboration (Manu, et al 2015) and value adding innovation.

The above structural factors have therefore tilted the balance in favour of the large tier 1 construction companies, despite the new legal landscape with the procurement act (Procurement Act 2023) seeking to unlock the potential advantages of direct regional supply chain engagements, and by implication regional SME engagement across EMCCA.

Direct procurement (e.g., direct appointment of trade contractors/specialists, client frameworks with key suppliers, or multiparty/alliancing forms) can realign incentives, reduce avoidable governance costs, and strengthen trust-based collaboration, innovation and value for the public sector beneficiaries. However, this will require that clients put in place appropriate capability and controls. We have drawn from three theoretical viewpoints in our previous procurement research to further evaluate the prevailing procurement models and offer reasons for which direct engagement of regional SMEs in the EMCCA area will be more beneficial, as enabled by the new Procurement Act. These theoretical perspectives are:

- **Transaction Cost Economics** (TCE) predicts that when transactions are asset-specific and uncertain (as in many construction packages), heavy reliance on arms-length contractual safeguards raises ex ante and ex post costs (tendering, monitoring, dispute resolution) and can still leave residual opportunism. In construction, the "buy it" (market) logic is often misapplied where "hybrid" or "in-house/relational" governance would economise on total costs (Sarhan et al., 2017).
- **Neo-Institutional Theory** explains the persistence of inefficient practices (e.g., lowest-price tendering, heavy amendments to standard forms, collateral warranties) through coercive, mimetic, and normative pressures, producing institutional waste (Sarhan et al., 2018).
- **Trust Theory** shows that resilient performance depends on trustworthiness (competence, integrity, reliability) rather than mere benefit-induced trustfulness, weak payment practices, opaque change management, and opportunistic claims, which undermine mutual confidence and information flow (Manu et al., 2015).

These theoretical positions jointly predict that reconfiguring governance to shorten contractual distance to the specialist supply chain can cut transaction costs, reduce waste in the procurement process, and enable trust-based performance and value addition (see Table 2).

Benefits	**Enablers**
Benefits of direct SME procurement	Practical enablers for direct procurement
Lower avoidable transaction and governance costs	Relational/collaborative contracts (e.g., alliance, framework options) Manu et al., (2015).
Reduced institutionalised waste from risk-averse safeguarding	Supply chain system and streamlined team dedicated to governance of supply chain interfaces and value/benefit addition.
Stronger trust and information flow via proximity to the specialists	Performance dashboards for trade suppliers (H&S, quality, flow reliability, cash compliance) to sustain trustworthiness-based selection (Manu et al., 2015).
Earlier and deeper specialist involvement, creating better design solutions and fewer changes	Early supplier involvement protocols, client driven or mandated supply chain database or framework, BIM and other digitally enabled

	coordination to reduce change orders and rework.
Payment certainty and cash-flow health in the lower tiers	Project bank accounts or escrow accounts, or government-backed payment guarantees, retention reform towards bonds to improve supply chain liquidity and payment trustworthiness (Manu et al., 2015).
Better risk allocation and insurance efficiency	Single project insurance where possible or better still streamlined policies (e.g., Latent defects insurance) to reduce duplicated cover and adversarial claims (Sarhan et al., 2017).
Capability building and learning at programme level	Training and capacity building, leveraging regional systems (supply chain database) that are focused on supporting clients engage supply chain directly.

Table 2: Potential benefits and enablers of direct engagement

The direct appointment of key trades collapses tiers, removes duplicated tendering/warranty chains, and reduces risk premiums otherwise embedded by Tier-1 contractors (Sarhan et al., 2017; Sarhan et al., 2018) as shown below in Figure 1. Standard contract forms over-amended with exculpatory clauses, fragmented insurances, and chains of collateral warranties are taken-for-granted safeguards that often stifle flow and collaboration and add unnecessary contingency and legal cost (Sarhan et al., 2017). Clients can replace some of these imperfect safeguards with flow and value-oriented arrangements (e.g., single project insurance, relational contracts, clearer risk-sharing models), reducing institutional waste and enabling smoother delivery (Sarhan et al., 2017). Trust between Tier-1 contractors and subcontractors is frequently undermined by payment practices, opportunistic variation management, and economic cycles, leading to defensive behaviours and less information sharing (Manu et al., 2015). Direct relational ties allow clients to set and enforce trustworthy practices (prompt payment, transparent change management, early warning) and to recognise performance directly. This fosters open, reliable information flow and reduces need for heavy and expensive layers of risk-averse controls (Manu et al., 2015).

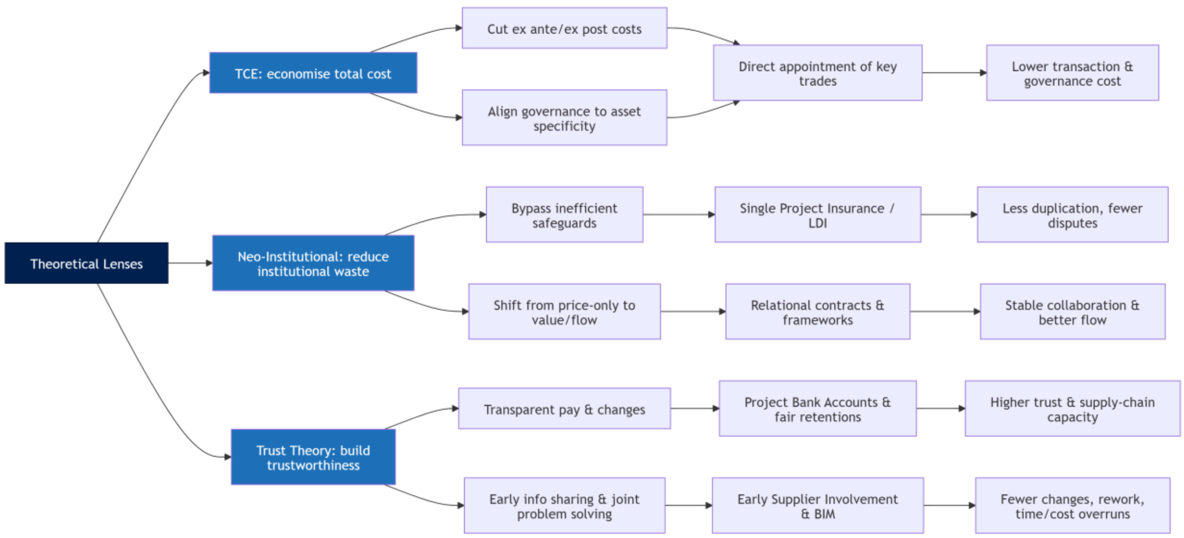

Figure 1: Potential benefits of direct engagement and the theoretical and research underpinnings

Sequential, lowest-price procurement delays specialist input, increasing design-construct misalignments and costly change. Direct frameworks/alliances with specialists bring know-how upstream, improving buildability, clash avoidance and programme realism, all of which are key to reducing change orders and rework (Sarhan et al., 2018; Manu et al., 2015) and adding overall value to projects. Late/uncertain payments and retention abuse at the Tier-1/Tier-2 interface create distrust and productivity losses, especially for SMEs (Manu et al., 2015). Direct client-to-trade payment (e.g., Project bank accounts, fair terms, retention reform) will increase trustworthiness, stabilise supply-chain capacity (Manu et al., 2015) and drive sustained regional growth and long-term benefit for communities. Conventional insurance arrangements cover each party's liability separately, encouraging defensive postures and even intra-team litigation to trigger cover, stifling collaboration and value addition. Direct procurement enables single project insurance (or latent defects insurance) to insure project risks rather than party liabilities, filling gaps, removing duplication, and supporting collaboration (Sarhan et al., 2017).

Direct, repeat-use relationships with trade specialists are a TCE-consistent hybrid that will lower monitoring/enforcement costs (Sarhan et al., 2017), reinforce learning loops, and help clients to retain trade-level performance intelligence (Sarhan et al., 2018). Client-held supply-chain frameworks accumulate performance data on trades, enabling targeted continuous improvement, stable teams, and fewer resets across projects (Sarhan et al., 2018).

Some coordination burden will rise without a Tier-1 integrator, but these can be managed client led frameworks and multiparty contracts with clear interface rules, possibly managed by an empowered programme management office at a regional level. These long-term frameworks with prequalified trades that go through a call-off mini-competitions on value criteria, not just price, can be backed by the supply chain database proposed by this project which is being developed by NTU CBIT. It may also be useful to initially prioritise high-value, high-specificity packages (e.g., façades, Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing, structural steel and concrete) where early involvement yields outsized benefits.

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Appendix vi: Inclusive growth in the construction industry

EMCCA's mayor, Claire Ward has called for inclusive growth in recognition of the need for us to make better use of our SME skills base and ensure that growth is not limited to our cities, hubs and clusters. The term 'Network Economy' better describes the growth model that we need to see in the East Midlands if we are to involve the many SMEs businesses that make up well over 50% of our workforce. This is particularly true within the construction industry where micro SMEs are commonplace, but notoriously 'hard to reach' and influence when new policies are being proposed.

Recent policy developments in this sector include attempts to broaden the definition of value to include societal and environmental benefit alongside the 'upfront' financial benefits that usually decide procurement bids. Another initiative, the Platform Design Approach, aims to simplify and co-ordinate our supply chains so that we manufacture fewer, better designed components as a better way of standardising production and boosting productivity than building identikit housing.

These are both well thought through and appropriate interventions, but their success is dependent on supply chain engagement and there being an equally well thought through implementation strategy. All too often, however, these interventions are announced through the release of a white paper with subsequent follow up articles in the industry press but little or no thought given to how they are to be taken forwards by the businesses that are expected to change their working practices for the greater good of the industry and the wider economy.

This lack of communication with the industry's supply chains at the implementation stage conceals a deeper flaw in the policy making process however, which is the lack of involvement of the supply chain at the policy's development stage, where a better understanding of the needs of these businesses would ensure willing engagement when the policy is launched. This top down approach to policy making is by no means limited to the construction industry but because of the preponderance of micro SMEs in this sector, it is particularly damaging to any attempt to bring about the changes this industry needs to make to boost productivity, strive for Net Zero and increase the quantity and quality of the housing we build.

The goal of Inclusive Growth is therefore not only the way to make the best use of our workforce potential, it's also the way to ensure we can implement the changes we need to make. The real question now is now can we achieve this on the ground and overcome the well-rehearsed reasons why this 'hard to reach' sector has proven so difficult to influence in the past. Clearly, having a means of communication that allows the messaging to get through is key, which this project aims to establish, but there also needs to be a message that supply chain companies are going to be interested in hearing – one that recognises their concerns and sets out a strategy for dealing with them.

That knowledge, from prior research and also discussed in Appendix V, has led to a proposal for a regional housing and retrofit strategy that will meet all the demands listed above and deliver inclusive growth across all sectors of the construction industry.

Appendix vii: The consultation

Procurement Survey

1. Introduction

Consultation on further reforms to public procurement.

The stated aims of this consultation were to ensure that public procurement improves domestic competitiveness, strengthening the UK's economic resilience and supporting British businesses. It completed on 5th Sept. and the feedback is now being analysed. The proposals in the consultation aim to build on the changes introduced in the Procurement Act 2023 to ensure that public procurement plays its full role in delivering the Government's industrial strategy.

The questions asked and the answers given here (in RED) all build to support the case for the platform being developed to help SMEs engage with the procurement process and also make procuring from SMEs a more attractive prospect.

Introduction

Public procurement is a key lever in achieving the Government's missions. By sourcing goods and services that provide value for money, we can drive sustainable growth and empower local communities. Taxpayer money must champion British businesses and create good local jobs while protecting our national resilience and economic security. We expect leaders in contracting authorities to carefully consider how they approach the exercise of their procurement functions to best support the delivery of the Government's missions. This goes further than just thinking about how procurements are structured and contracts are delivered; to include how services are designed, whose voices are being heard as part of the commissioning process, how a community's needs are met, and how markets are created and managed to foster a competitive and dynamic local economy.

The Procurement Act 2023 (the 'Act') reformed the rules that govern the £385billion spent through public procurement every year. In line with the manifesto, the Government intends to use the Act to create a simpler and more transparent regime for public sector procurement that delivers better value for money, drives economic growth, and safeguards national interests.

The Act came into force on 24 February 2025 with a new National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) setting out the Government's strategic priorities for public procurement. The Act revoked the previous regulations, (i.e. the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, the Concession Contracts Regulations 2016, the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 and the Defence and Security Public Contracts Regulations 2011). However, some procurements will continue to take place under these 'previous rules'.

How to respond to this consultation

This consultation opens on 26.06.2025 and closes on 05.09.2025.

We invite you to respond to the questions in this consultation by 05.09.2025. If you have any queries in relation to completing the survey please email procurement.reform@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

This consultation seeks feedback on whether the suggested proposals meet the intended policy ambitions as set out within the consultation. The majority of questions will ask respondents to state to what extent they agree or disagree with the question posed under each section. Respondents should reply using the following scale; strongly disagree, disagree; neither agree nor disagree; agree, strongly agree. If respondents wish to explain why they do or do not agree with the question, they have the opportunity to explain why they believe this to be the case.

For information on how the Cabinet Office will use and manage your data, please see the Cabinet Office's corporate Privacy Notice for public consultations here.

2. Actions implemented in central government

To support implementation of the NPPS, the Government has already introduced a number of new measures:

- All central government departments and their arm's length bodies (ALBs) will set three-year targets for direct spend with SMEs from 1 April 2025 (with targets for VCSEs to follow in 2026) and publish progress annually.
- Requiring departments to exclude suppliers from bidding for major contracts (+£5m) if they cannot demonstrate they pay their invoices in an average of 45 days.
- Publishing an update to the model for taking account of social value in central government procurement, streamlining the standard criteria and aligning with the five missions.
- Establishing a new online register of commercial agreements that will give contracting authorities better visibility of existing frameworks and the fees they charge, improving decision-making and ensuring value is maximised.

The Government is also considering giving Ministers powers to designate specific services, works or goods as critical to our economic security (e.g. to protect national supply chain resilience) and allowing them to direct contracting authorities to take this into account when considering whether the national security exemption in the Procurement Act 2023 applies to a particular procurement.

The proposals in this consultation aim to build on these measures to ensure that public procurement plays its full role in delivering the Government's industrial strategy and fostering a resilient economy that supports British businesses and creates good jobs in communities across the country. These reforms will enhance the UK's economic resilience and strengthen supply chains in line with the Government's industrial strategy. They will open up more opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary, community, and social enterprises (VCSEs), which are vital for driving the UK economy. This approach will enable public procurement to advance the national interest while respecting the UK's international trade commitments.

3. Proposals for consultation

Supporting small businesses and social enterprises

- Requiring large contracting authorities with spend over £100m p.a. to publish their own 3-year target for direct spend with SMEs and VCSEs and report against it annually, as well as extending spend reporting requirements.
- Requiring contracting authorities to exclude suppliers from bidding on major contracts (+£5m p.a.) if they cannot demonstrate prompt payment of invoices to their supply chains.
- Clarifying in primary legislation where it may be appropriate to award contracts for certain services delivered to vulnerable citizens without full competitive procedure, so that decisions can be driven by the needs of the individuals and vulnerable groups.

Supporting national capability

- Requiring contracting authorities to make a standard assessment before procuring a major service contract (+£5m) in order to test whether service delivery should be inhouse or outsourced.

Supporting local jobs and skills

- Requiring contracting authorities to set at least one award criteria in major procurements (+£5m) which relates to the quality of the supplier's contribution to jobs, opportunities or skills. Contracting authorities would need to apply a minimum weighting of 10% of the scores available, to social value award criteria.
- Requiring contracting authorities to set at least one social value KPI relating to jobs, opportunities or skills in major contracts (+£5m) and report on delivery performance against this KPI in the contract performance notice.
- Requiring contracting authorities to use standard social value criteria and metrics selected from a streamlined list (to be co-designed with the public sector) in their procurement of public contracts.
- Allowing contracting authorities to specify the area in which the social value is to be delivered by choosing between the location of a contracting authority's area of responsibility, the location where the contract will be performed, or the location where the supplier is based.

Based on the feedback on these proposals and when parliamentary time allows, the Government intends to introduce legislation to amend the Act. As part of this process the government will also look to introduce minor technical amendments to the Act under this legislation.

Application

The Government anticipates that the reforms proposed in this consultation would only apply in respect of contracting authorities undertaking wholly or mainly reserved functions. We will continue to engage with the Welsh Government, Northern Ireland Executive and Scottish Government about the application of these proposed reforms.

4. Supporting small businesses and social enterprises

The Government proposes:

- **Requiring large contracting authorities with spend over £100m p.a. to publish their own 3-year target for direct spend with SMEs and VCSEs and report against it annually, as well as extending spend reporting requirements.**
- **Clarifying in primary legislation where it may be appropriate to award contracts for certain services delivered to vulnerable citizens without full competitive procedure, so that decisions can be driven by the needs of the individuals and vulnerable groups.**
- **Requiring contracting authorities to exclude suppliers from bidding on major contracts (+£5m p.a.) if they cannot demonstrate prompt payment of invoices to their supply chains.**

Small businesses are the lifeblood of our communities and play an essential role in delivering growth - 99.8% of businesses in the UK are small businesses and they employ over 60% of the British workforce. With public procurement accounting for around a third of total public sector spending, increasing spend with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary, community, and social enterprises (VCSEs) is a key lever for economic growth.

The Act provides greater flexibility to contracting authorities to design efficient, commercial competitions. It introduces a number of reforms which make it easier for SMEs and VCSEs to access public sector supply-chains and remove unnecessary burdens and costs, including:

- a duty on the face of the Act for contracting authorities to consider whether they can remove barriers to SME participation;
- greater visibility of upcoming public sector opportunities and early market engagement to explain requirements to better help SMEs and VCSEs prepare to bid;
- allowing contracting authorities to reserve lower value contracts for SMEs, VCSEs or UK suppliers so only they can bid for the opportunity;
- banning common barriers contracting authorities can use when setting criteria for procurements (e.g. requiring insurance to be in place before contract award);
- banning 'Pre-Qualification Questionnaires' in lower value procurements so that SMEs and VCSEs cannot be knocked out of the process at the first stage;
- requiring 30 day payment terms to apply throughout the public sector supply chain;
- requiring contracting authorities to publish their payment performance data in one place to allow comparisons across the public and private sector.

The Government wants to go further in support of the Plan for Change and reform procurement rules to give SMEs and VCSEs greater access to public contracts. By strengthening the participation of

SMEs and VCSEs, we can boost national resilience, enhance our supply chains, and create good local jobs that benefit communities across the country.

5. Targets for increasing procurement spend with SME and VCSEs

The Government proposes:

- Amending the Act to mandate large contracting authorities with procurement spend over £100m p.a. (which would include large councils, NHS Trusts, etc.) to publish their own 3-year target for direct spend with SMEs and VCSEs and report against it annually.

Authorities would be able to determine their own target in line with their categories of spend, however, in line with the National Procurement Policy Statement, the Government's expectation is that authorities should set stretching targets to increase spend with SMEs and VCSEs year on year. To support transparency and comparison across the public sector, data would be required to be published in one place (for example on the Central Digital Platform). The Cabinet Office would provide guidance on setting spend targets and reporting progress to support consistency. We are proposing that this measure would only apply to large contracting authorities with spend over £100m p.a. to align with the existing requirement to publish procurement pipelines and appropriately target those authorities with the greatest spend. There would be no financial penalty for not achieving the target.

The reporting of these targets will be supported by the transparency requirements under section 70 of the Act. Contracting authorities are currently required to publish information about any payment of more than £30,000 made by the authority under a public contract, within 30 days of the end of each quarter. The legal requirement to publish payment information under section 70 of the Act did not come into force when the new regime went live on 24 February 2025, but is expected to be commenced in due course.

To support implementation of section 70 and the proposals on spend targets, the Government is exploring how to digitally match payments held in finance systems to information about public contracts that have been published on the Central Digital Platform (CDP). This would automate the tracking of spend data against targets for contracting authorities and reduce reporting burdens. It would streamline the data collection process, ensure real-time updates, and facilitate better reporting capabilities, ultimately fostering a more transparent and accountable spending environment.

To align SME spend target reporting and payment reporting under section 70, the Government proposes:

- Extending the requirements of section 70 of the Act to ensure that information on all payments made under public contracts is published, effectively removing the current £30,000 threshold, and extending coverage of section 70 to include payments covered by notifiable below-threshold contracts.

A notifiable below-threshold contract is a regulated below threshold contract with (if it is being awarded by a central Government authority) a value of not less than £12,000 or (if it is being awarded by any other contracting authority) a value of not less than £30,000. A below-threshold contract is not notifiable if the contracting authority is a school, or if the contract is a concessions contract or a utilities contract.

Expanding the reporting requirements under section 70 of the Act to all payments made under public contracts would help to capture a more complete view of SME and VCSE spend and make it easier to report against spend targets. Going further and extending coverage of section 70 payments relating to notifiable below-threshold contracts would capture a wider set of SME and VCSE spend data.

6. Questions on supporting small businesses and social enterprises

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that mandating large contracting authorities with spend over £100m p.a. to set 3-year targets for their procurement spend with SMEs and VCSEs and publish annual progress against these targets, would help increase spend with SMEs and VCSEs?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]

This is a necessary requirement but must be aligned with measures that make procuring from SMEs easier or more appealing otherwise it becomes another barrier to overcome rather than a driver for change

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that extending the requirements of section 70 of the Act to publish information on (i) all payments made under public contracts and (ii) payments under notifiable below-threshold contracts, would help increase spend with SMEs and VCSEs?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]

Same concerns as above

7. Prompt Payment

Late payment of invoices is a significant problem for many businesses, including small businesses within public sector supply chains. Long payment terms and late payments can have a damaging knock-on effect on businesses' ability to manage their cash flow and plan for growth. In the worst cases it can threaten their survival. Late payment remains a significant issue in the UK, with £23.4 billion owed to SMEs with research showing that SMEs are on average owed £22,000 a year, and leads to 50,000 business closures per annum according to Federation of Small Businesses. Government departments are already required to pay their invoices within 30 days, and the majority pay over 80% of their invoices within five days, but the power of procurement can be used to improve standards across the board.

Current Government policy requires central government departments to ensure suppliers demonstrate that they pay their supply chain on time (the standard is 95% of invoices paid within 60 days, and within an average of 45 days overall) as a condition of bidding for major contracts (+£5m per annum). This has driven significant improvements in payment performance amongst Government's largest suppliers, with payment times improving by more than 20%. The Act now also implies 30-day payment terms into future contracts and subcontracts when they are part of the public sector supply chain.

The Government proposes:

- Amending the Act to require contracting authorities to exclude suppliers from bidding for major contracts (+£5m per annum) if they cannot demonstrate they pay their invoices within an average of 60 days. If contracting authorities do not exclude suppliers they will be required to provide an explanation.

Extending the current policy beyond central government organisations would ensure that more suppliers across the public sector are committed to paying their supply chains on time. The measure would be implemented on a 'comply or explain' basis so that authorities would not be required to apply it where they can demonstrate it would reduce competition or jeopardise value for money.

Unlike the terms implied by the Act, the proposed measure would take account of every invoice a business has paid, regardless of whether it forms part of a public supply chain, broadening the benefits of prompt payment across the entire economy. To maximise impact, this measure will also apply irrespective of whether the supplier is using a supply chain for a given contract, going beyond the current policy requirement for central government.

Linking performance to the average time taken to pay invoices, will make it easier to change the threshold downwards in the future, and drive future performance improvement. Starting at 60 days, rather than the current 45 days used by central government departments, will allow for performance improvement without impacting delivery of essential services.

Applying the measure only to contracts over £5m p.a. will target the measure towards larger suppliers with a supply chain, ensuring its application remains proportionate and aligned with the existing, well-established policy in central government. We would however provide a power for Ministers to amend these thresholds in the future.

8. Questions on prompt payment

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3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that requiring contracting authorities to exclude suppliers from bidding on major contracts (+£5m per annum) if they cannot demonstrate prompt payment of invoices to their supply chains (within an average of 60 days) would help improve late payment by suppliers to the public sector?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]

The average should be measured on the total value of invoices paid not the number. Too easy to pay the small ones and delay the big ones under this system.

9. People-focused services

People-focused public services, such as adult and children's care, are vital to our communities. These services are designed to address the needs of vulnerable users, ensuring that they receive high-quality support specific to their circumstances. When procurement focuses only on competition, the standards of these essential services can decline, negatively impacting the very individuals they are meant to serve.

The Act ensures that people-focused services benefit from significant flexibilities. This includes the user choice direct award justification which removes the potential conflict where there are legislative obligations for choice such as those in the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 and the assumption of competition in the Procurement Act.

Recent feedback has indicated that more flexibility is needed when awarding contracts to deliver certain services to vulnerable individuals, particularly when the market is limited and services are needed within a limited geographical area. For example, stakeholders have asserted that competition in the children's homes and adult social care homes sectors is not delivering better commercial or user outcomes. It is crucial that we prioritise the interests and experiences of users in the design and delivery of these services to ensure better outcomes for everyone involved and we are keen to understand how we can improve procurement of these vital services.

The Government proposes:

- Clarifying in primary legislation where it may be appropriate to award contracts for certain services delivered to vulnerable citizens without a full competitive procedure, so that decisions can be driven by the needs of the individuals and vulnerable groups.

We are considering how we can best incorporate more flexibility into the procurement regime to ensure that these services can be procured in the best way. It could be to amend the scope of the Procurement Act or to amend provisions such as the user choice direct award justification or by making better use of frameworks and dynamic markets.

We want to help local authorities focus their resources on meeting user needs and building effective partnerships with local providers based on common values to create a supportive and enabling environment for users. We want to remove the unnecessary bureaucracy imposed on contracting authorities when the market conditions or sensitive nature of the requirement mean that a complex procurement process is not an efficient way to deliver the service.

These reforms aim to prioritise high-quality service delivery, allowing contracting authorities to make decisions that support market development, for example longer term contracts that increase market confidence (particularly for small businesses, charities and social enterprises) to invest in new properties. By reducing the focus on commercial procurement for these essential services, we can foster an environment where quality care and support take precedence, benefiting users of the services and where outcomes improve for users and communities alike.

10. Questions on people-focused services

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4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that there should be flexibility for contracts for people focused services to be awarded without competition?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]

The broadening of value to include social benefit was also meant to include environmental benefit. This was originally expected to capture all development, but this feels like it's been reduced to just those sectors where there is clear social need and will leave the majority of contracts to be awarded on financial up front cost alone.

11. Questions on people-focused services (cont'd)

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5. Are there other services delivered to vulnerable citizens (beyond adult and children's social care) that warrant procurement processes not permitted in the Procurement Act 2023? Please include i) the CPV code where possible and description of the services; ii) the nature of the problem faced; iii) the optimal policy solution(s). [NB 2000 character limit]

6. Do you have any examples where people-focused services have been procured well? Do you have any suggestions for changes to the processes available under the Procurement Act or guidance that could improve procurement of these services? [NB 2000 character limit]

There is an argument for all social housing to be dealt with as a special need if we are to break the cycle of undersupply, mainly due to its delivery being dependent on the spec house builder's business model. This has never worked and never will. We need the two demands to be separated out with two distinct delivery models.

12. Supporting national capability

The Government proposes:

- **Giving Ministers powers to designate specific services, works or goods as critical to our national security and direct contracting authorities to take this into account when considering whether the national security exemption applies to a particular procurement to protect the UK's national interests.**
- **Requiring contracting authorities to make a standard assessment before procuring a major service contract (+£5m) in order to test whether service delivery should be inhouse or outsourced.**

In today's climate of global economic uncertainty, governments must bolster domestic resilience and protect national security. By prioritising vital sectors such as steel and defence, we can strengthen our supply chains and ensure that the UK can thrive in a competitive world. These reforms will recognise and reward the high quality and exceptional standards of British suppliers, ensuring taxpayer money supports businesses that do the right thing.

National security - economic security

Safeguarding economic security and strengthening domestic supply chains are more critical than ever. Disruptions in international markets have exposed vulnerabilities that threaten our national interests and overall stability. By prioritising the resilience of our supply chains, we can safeguard our national interests, strengthen our economy, create jobs, and ensure the integrity of our procurement processes. The protection of infrastructure and activities critical for the functioning or stability of our economy is one factor that may be relevant to the safeguarding of UK national security. The Government is of the view that in certain circumstances it is appropriate to take into account such matters in the application of the national security exemption (in paragraph 25 of Schedule 2 to the Act).

To protect the UK's national interests, the Government is considering giving Ministers powers to designate specific services, works or goods as critical to our economic security and direct contracting authorities to take this into account when considering the application of the national security exemption.

This primary legislation power would allow a Minister of the Crown to establish clear rules via secondary legislation for how these critical services, works, or goods are identified.

Where a service or product is designated as critical, contracting authorities would need to review their purchasing plans to assess any potential risks involved in depending on international suppliers. If there are significant concerns for national security, they could then use the national security exemption available under the Procurement Act 2023 and in line with our international agreements, including the WTO Agreement on Government Procurement. This exemption offers dispensation from the usual competitive bidding process and enables contracting authorities to directly contract with trusted suppliers. This targeted approach would enable us to make informed procurement decisions that protect vital industries, strengthen supply chains and ensure a stable supply of essential goods.

The government is not inviting public consultation on this proposal but will engage with relevant national security stakeholders as necessary.

13. Building commercial capability through sourcing decisions

Over the past few decades, outsourcing has been a primary method for delivering public services in the UK, with spending on outsourced services reaching around £146 billion in the 2022-2023 financial year—higher than the OECD average. This model involves contracting external suppliers for services previously provided by public sector teams, aiming to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and leverage private sector expertise.

However, while outsourcing has yielded benefits, it has also raised concerns regarding quality, accountability, and resilience. Issues have arisen about the extent of outsourcing, particularly for complex and critical services that are essential to government functioning and public accountability. These challenges highlight the need for more scrutiny and accountability in outsourcing decisions, prompting the government to advocate for a careful, case-by-case examination of whether to outsource or insource, emphasising cost-effectiveness, resilience, service quality, and public value.

In response, insourcing - where public sector bodies regain direct control of service delivery - has become a viable alternative. Insourcing improves accountability, service quality, and employment standards. Many local authorities have successfully insourced services like cleaning and repairs, leading to better outcomes for workers and communities.

Going forward, we want public sector bodies to take a long term view when deciding how best to deliver public services and develop sourcing strategies that formalise this. Sourcing strategies will enable public sector bodies to set out their operational delivery model, identify potential opportunities for insourcing and inform decisions on individual contracts as they expire. This can look at the diversity of delivery when there is outsourcing, including voluntary sector organisations, mutuals, social enterprises and SMEs. Importantly, they will enable an organisation to outline its vision for the future and avoid taking a piecemeal approach. Public sector bodies will use their sourcing strategy to identify any gaps in their capability, capacity, skills or culture that they need to have in-house, in order to make insourcing a success and implement their strategy over the medium term. The management focus, skills and capabilities required to transition a service in-house will be different from those required for the business as usual running of the service.

Before any service is contracted out, public bodies would be required to carry out a quick and proportionate public interest test, to understand whether that work could not be more effectively done in-house. The test will evaluate value for money, impact on service quality and economic and social value goals holistically.

The public interest test will be a series of questions that the authority must answer to help inform its decision on the appropriate delivery model. This is likely to include (but not limited to):

- appropriate in-house capability;
- evidence of cost savings or service quality improvements;
- whether the service is core to the organisation's objectives;
- need for greater control or accountability over the service;
- whether the service is a government created market; and
- whether the existing contract/service is performing as expected.

We would require the outcomes of the public interest test to be published to provide transparency.

Where the public interest test suggests the service is a good candidate for insourcing, the contracting authority should then undertake a delivery model assessment in the usual way to decide the details of how best to deliver the service.

14. Building commercial capability through sourcing decisions (cont'd)

We recognise that not all outsourced service contracts will be covered by the definitions in the Act (e.g. wholly owned subsidiaries such as Local Authority Trading Companies) and invite views as part of this consultation on any additional contracts that should be in scope for the public interest test. We are also interested in views on the types of contracts that should be in scope to ensure an appropriate size (e.g. +£5m) and complexity of service is covered.

The Government proposes:

- Primary legislation to amend the Act to mandate contracting authorities to carry out a public interest test prior to making a sourcing decision on major service contracts (+£5m).
- Secondary legislation under the Act to require contracting authorities to publish the results of the public interest test in the tender notice.

15. Questions on supporting national capability

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7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that contracting authorities should be required to undertake a public interest test and publish it when making sourcing decisions?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]

Like so many other demands of this nature, unless there's a direct benefit to a Contracting Authority in declaring there to be a 'public interest' it will be an uphill struggle to get any engagement with this. On-shoring only becomes interesting to individual businesses when it's of regional benefit, so this should be part of Combined Authorities' strategic planning through their devolved powers.

16. Supporting good quality, local jobs and skills

The Government proposes:

- **Requiring contracting authorities to set at least one award criteria in major procurements (+£5m) which relates to the quality of the supplier's contribution to jobs, opportunities or skills. Contracting authorities would need to apply a minimum weighting of 10% of the scores available, to social value award criteria.**

- **Requiring contracting authorities to set at least one social value KPI relating to jobs, opportunities or skills in major contracts (+£5m) and report on delivery performance against this KPI in the contract performance notice.**
- **Requiring contracting authorities to use standard social value criteria and metrics selected from a streamlined list (to be co-designed with the public sector and suppliers) in their procurement of public contracts.**
- **Allowing contracting authorities to specify the area in which the social value is to be delivered by choosing between the location of a contracting authority's area of responsibility, the location where the contract will be performed, or the location where the supplier is based.**

In the National Procurement Policy Statement, the Government set out that contracting authorities should deliver social and economic value that supports the Government's missions, particularly good quality jobs, opportunities and skills to boost productivity and economic growth. In addition, the NPPS encourages greater collaboration at the local level and between central and local government. Social value should not be about tactical 'tick-boxing'. It must be aligned to actual need. That means working collaboratively to identify those who are furthest from the labour market, such as those with long term health conditions, care leavers, prison leavers and young people with additional needs, and opening up jobs and skills opportunities to them so they can engage in the labour market.

Currently award criteria, including social value award criteria, must relate to the subject-matter of the contract and be a proportionate means of assessing tenders. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires certain contracting authorities to "consider how what is being procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area".

17. Supporting good quality, local jobs and skills (cont'd)

Strengthening and streamlining social value

The success of many of the government's goals, such as creating good jobs, meeting the needs for skilled workers and reducing economic inactivity depends on how suppliers work with their staff, suppliers and communities. Therefore, the government should ensure that the suppliers it works with align with these goals by providing good jobs with decent pay, conditions and security, making it easier for people to return to work, and offering training when delivering its contracts. Making social value a mandatory requirement in contracts would reward suppliers who support these national aims. However, it is vital to find a balance that maximises benefits without placing unnecessary burdens on suppliers and increasing cost of delivery.

Many authorities have successfully used social value in procurement, and suppliers have responded positively. However, industry representative bodies still report too frequently that SMEs find social value requirements difficult to navigate and that performance is poorly managed. This needs to change. The Government wants to improve this by streamlining social value efforts, focusing on the most impactful contracts, increasing transparency on the delivery of commitments, and concentrating on those outcomes that are crucial for success. The Government wants to see more meaningful dialogue with suppliers and the proper management of social value delivery.

The Government proposes:

- Requiring contracting authorities to set at least one award criteria in major procurements (+£5m) which relates to the quality of the supplier's contribution to jobs, opportunities or skills. Contracting authorities would need to apply a minimum weighting of 10% of the scores available, to social value award criteria.
- Requiring contracting authorities to set at least one key performance indicator on social value delivery relating to jobs, opportunities or skills in major contracts (+£5m) and report on progress against this in the contract performance notice.
- Requiring contracting authorities to use standard social value criteria and metrics selected from a streamlined list (to be co-designed with the public sector) in their procurement of public contracts.

These proposals would strengthen the rules by making social value award criteria mandatory but focus these requirements on the national priorities of jobs, opportunities and skills, in those places and for those people that need them the most. We acknowledge that sometimes it may not be reasonable for contracting authorities to set such social value award criteria and key performance indicators (KPIs); in this case, they would need to explain why in the tender notice. Further, this approach improves supplier accountability by connecting social value commitments to clear, measurable indicators and allows the public to track progress.

The Government intends to develop a new social value tool that provides a much simpler, streamlined set of award criteria and metrics (and where appropriate, economic values for these metrics). Recognising the range of expertise that already exists, this new tool would be co-designed with local government and the wider public sector. To make bidding and reporting easier, the government proposes requiring contracting authorities to select from these standard social value criteria and metrics in their procurement of public contracts (i.e. above threshold). Contracting authorities would be able to apply additional criteria and metrics to meet local priorities if these were not covered by the standard set.

18. Supporting good quality, local jobs and skills (cont'd)

Strengthening and streamlining social value cont'd

Furthermore, section 23 of the Procurement Act 2023 requires that all award criteria must relate to the contract's subject matter. This rule prevents authorities the flexibility of targeting social value delivery to where it is most needed. To address this, we are proposing measures which will remove this restriction in specified circumstances, to allow contracting authorities to define social value award criteria based on specific locations, while taking into account fair and equal treatment of suppliers.

Where social value is delivered

The Government wants social value that is effective; based on local intelligence about what will boost productivity and economic growth regionally and build on local partnerships e.g. with local anchor institutions to deliver the skills needed. However, the current definition of 'relevant area' under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 restricts social value outcomes to the location of the contracting authority. In central government contracts, this limitation inhibits suppliers' ability to build valuable and sustained local relationships and networks that are crucial for creating jobs and developing skills.

The Government proposes:

- Allowing contracting authorities to specify the area in which the social value is to be delivered by choosing between: the location of a contracting authority's area of responsibility, the location where the contract will be performed or the location where the supplier is based.

Contracting authorities would still need to specify the social value outcomes that they seek. This new flexibility would help contracting authorities, especially central government departments, use their contracts to support local goals as set out e.g. in Economic Growth Plans. This change will allow suppliers to form partnerships and engage with communities beyond the contracting authority's immediate area. We expect this flexibility to be used mainly by authorities whose spending is not linked to a specific location. In line with the UK's international trade obligations, authorities would need to ensure that they ensure fair and equal treatment of suppliers, including treaty state suppliers.

19. Questions on supporting good quality, local jobs and skills

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8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that requiring authorities to set an award criteria which relates to the quality of the supplier's contribution to jobs, opportunities or skills for all public contracts over £5m and with a minimum evaluation weighting of 10%, will help to deliver social value that supports economic growth?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]

Again, there needs to be solutions that show where the benefits are in doing this for the individual business. If it means securing a trained workforce in the region, or gaining access to a wider labour pool these are positives that will provide the carrots alongside the 10% stick.

20. Questions on supporting good quality, local jobs and skills (cont'd)

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9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that, where authorities have set social value award criteria relating to jobs or skills, mandating that they also set at least one KPI on social value delivery, and subsequently report performance against a social value KPI (published in the contract performance notice), will support transparency of progress against social value commitments?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]

21. Questions on supporting good quality, local jobs and skills (cont'd)

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10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that requiring contracting authorities to use standard social value criteria and metrics selected from a streamlined list (to be co-designed with the public sector and suppliers) in their procurement of public contracts will help to deliver social value in a proportionate manner?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]

I have designed a set of metrics that deliver this for the construction industry but they include the negatives as well as the positives. If you don't do this it will be seen for what it is – a coercive attempt *to bring about change without providing all the facts businesses need to make their own informed choices that will benefit them too.*

11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that contracting authorities should be permitted to define the geographical location of where social value will be delivered as described above? Do you have any suggestions for innovative ways of delivering social value including by creating more flexibility in the current requirements in the Act on relevance and proportionality?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If you wish to explain why you do or do not agree that the proposed measure reflects or delivers the policy intent described above, please do so here. [NB 2000 character limit]

I agree that how it is defined should be relaxed, but still feel there is a benefit to be gained in driving this as a regional challenge which would need there to be some clear advantage in moving towards shorter simplified supply chains where possible.

22. About you

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12. Please tell us about yourself. *

First name *

Last name *

Job Title *

13. What is your email address? *

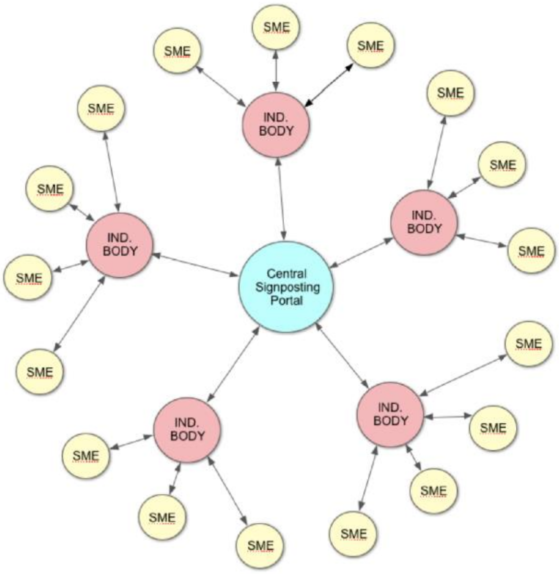
14. Are you responding as a private individual or do you work for an organisation concerned with public procurement? *

- Individual
- Organisation

Appendix viii: Powerpoint guides to the questionnaires

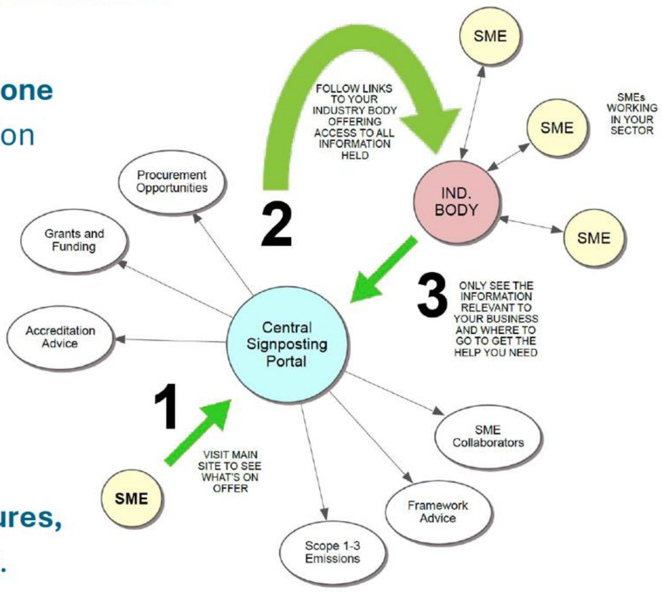
What's the business model that will keep this alive?

- The way to reach SMEs is through the many **industry bodies** who support you.
- Industry bodies will serve as entry points for SMEs to access the **central resource**, enabling us to **tailor the information** to each sector based on the industry body you belong to.
- In return , Industry Bodies get **new members** directed to them to gain access.
- EMCCA then takes a **nominal percentage** from each of their membership fee incomes to help maintain the site.



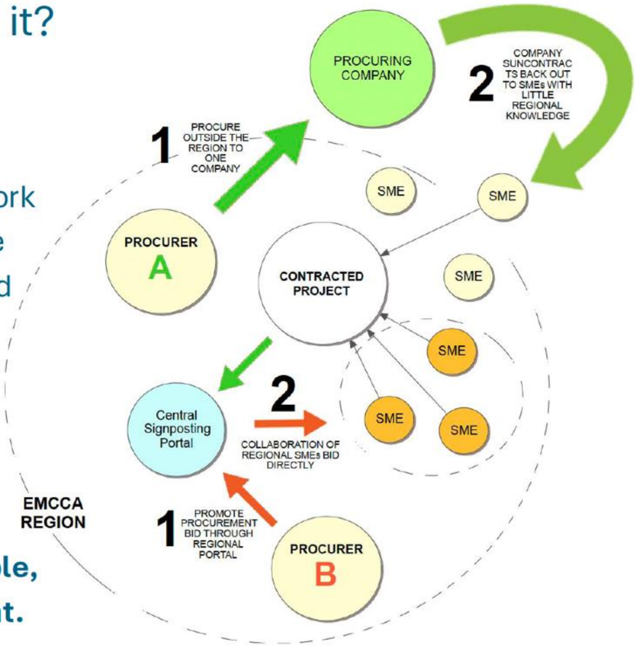
How would SME's access this resource?

- The central site can be visited by **anyone but with limited access** to information held there.
- To gain **full access** to the detailed information, the SME has to enter **via an industry body** website that they are a member of.
- Full access will include information about **procurement contracts, frameworks, accreditation procedures, other SMEs to collaborate with**, etc.



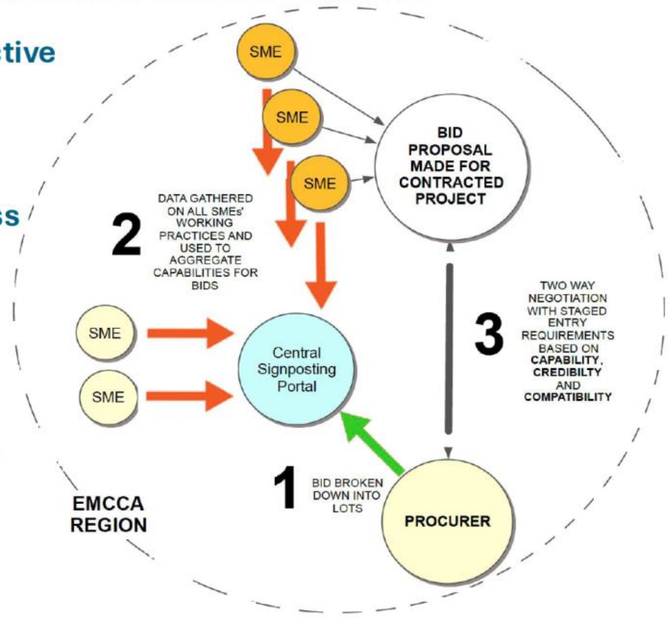
Why would procurers want to use it?

- Procurers want to procure **more locally and more directly (Procurer B).**
- However, it is often **easier** for them to work with **larger national** firms, which may be more proficient at navigating the required processes but can also be **more expensive.**
- There is also a drive from combined authorities to encourage more **regional collaboration** to drive local economies and make procurement **more sustainable, more resilient, and more self-sufficient.**



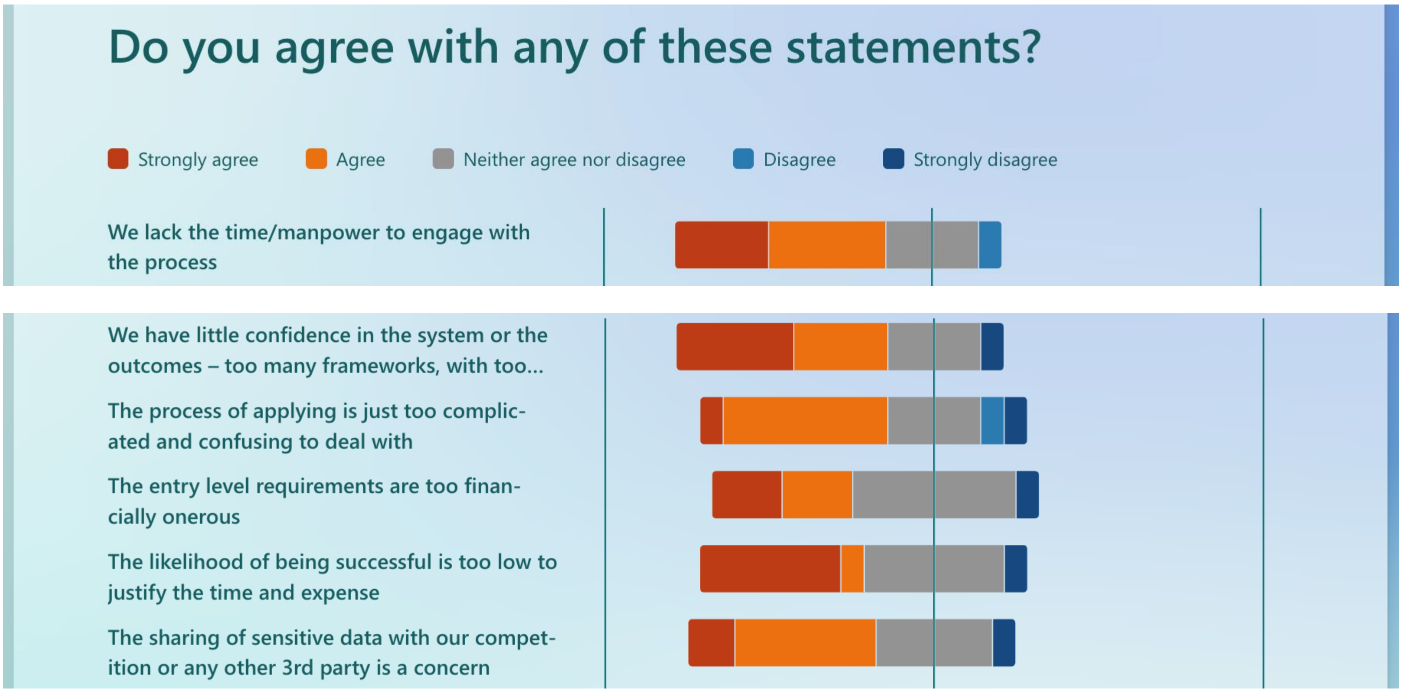
How can this make it easier for SMEs to win contracts?

- We want to make SMEs **more attractive** to procurers.
- We need to get you up to speed by making the process **easier to access and less expensive** up front.
- We also want to find a way to **aggregate your capabilities** so that you can work together to meet bid requirements without needing a middleman to act for you.

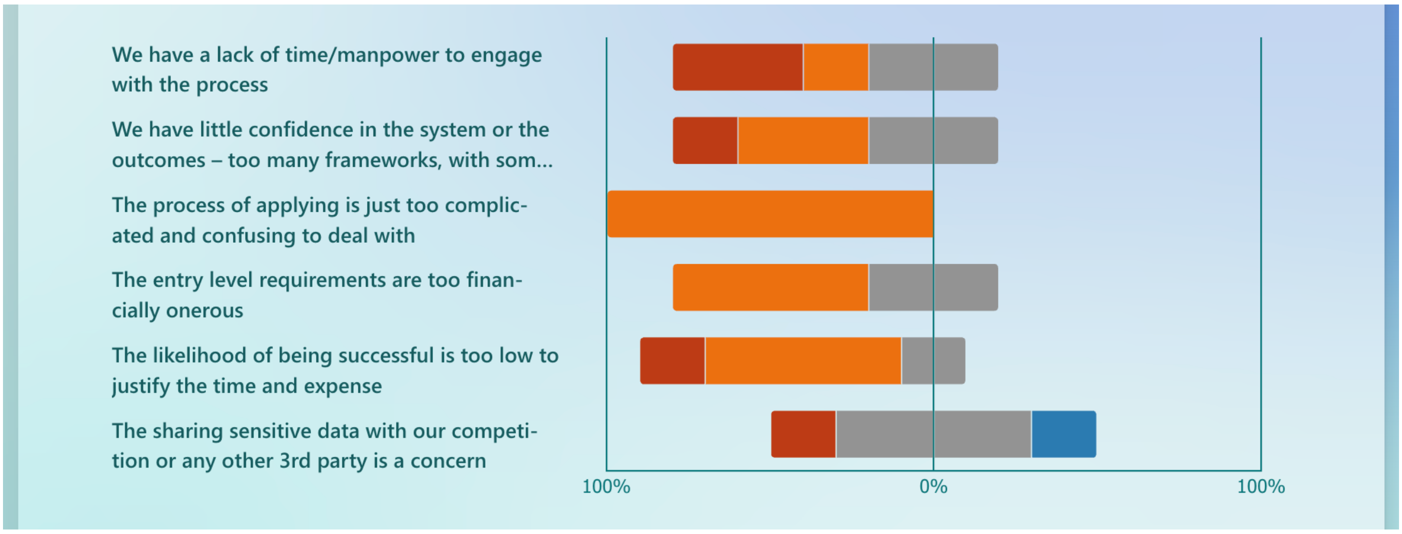


Appendix ix: SME feedback

Feedback received from discussions and from the questionnaires sent out to SMEs in the region has helped inform the functionality of the platform being created. Analysis of this data is ongoing as more questionnaires continue to arrive.



The same questions asked only to SMEs in the Construction Sector received stronger responses:



But there was no one who felt they had no need to engage with the procurement process.

130

Many of the additional questions asked were to gain a better understanding of individual businesses working practices to inform the software programme being developed to allow it to match companies with both the procurement bids on offer and to other SMEs for collaborative purposes. The feedback from these questions was found to be too superficial to be of any real benefit and a further questionnaire was devised to get a more complete picture, based on a taxonomy of industry processes found within the construction industry.

This is now being trialled with a view to it forming part of the enrolment process where SMEs access the central signposting site via their Industry Body's website. Recognising this as the type of barrier to engagement this project is trying to remove however, further discussions have been had with the trial group of SMEs about what would be an acceptable level of information to ask for and what would incentive them to provide it.

The known incentive is some form of immediate payback, whether that be financial or in a guarantee of future work, neither of which are currently viable or feasible options. What can be offered however is immediate anonymised benchmarking against other SMEs and also against the requirements of bids within their sector. This is on genuine interest and benefit to most businesses and easy to generate and maintain through the software being developed.

SMEs live or die through their reputations and quality of service is critical to this, but the procurement process in its current form often bars them from entry on financial or accreditation grounds before this can even be considered.

EAST MIDLANDS INVESTMENT ZONE SPRINT

Capability Survey to be completed by SMEs on first entry to the Signposting Service:

Before we take you to the Central Signposting Portal, we need to know more about your business so we can filter the sites you'll be shown and make sure they're all relevant to your sector. In return we will send you:

- a report benchmarking your business against other regional SMEs operating in your sector,
- a percentage fit for your business against all of the bids currently open that are relevant to you
- advice on how to 'fill in the gaps' to make your business a more appealing prospect to procurers
- suggestions about what other regional SMEs you could collaborate with to answer any bid as a partnership
- or what bids you could answer were you to collaborate with another SME of your choosing.

Everything you might need to know more about can be found from this site, but nothing is held here or replicated from elsewhere - this is just a one-stop-shop point of reference, and if there's anything missing, tell us and we'll make sure it gets added. This is a resource that has been developed by the East Midlands Combined County Authority (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire) to help us make better use of our regional skills base and grow our regional economy. It is financed by 1% of your membership fees to the Industry Body you used to enter the site from. The more it is used, the more beneficial it will become, for SMEs, for Procurers and for the East Midlands.

The following questions are under three headings of:
Capability - what you do and where you do it
Credibility - what accreditations and insurance you have
Compatibility - where you fit and how you operate

Nothing we ask for is seen to be sensitive information, but only give answers you feel comfortable sharing.

Capability

what you do, where you do it . . .

1. Company Name *

Enter your answer

2. Company Registration Number (optional)

Enter your answer

3. Company Address *

4. Contact Name

Enter your answer

5. Company Phone Number *

Enter your answer

6. Company Email *

Enter your answer

7. Company website

Enter your answer

8. Business Description *

Enter your answer

Credibility

What accreditations you hold

9. Size of company - how many employees? *

Enter your answer

10. What is your geographical reach? *

- Local
- Regional
- National

11. What level of PI Insurance do you hold?

Enter your answer

12. What level of Public Liability Insurance do you hold?

Enter your answer

13. What level of Employers Liability Insurance do you hold?

Enter your answer

14. What level of Product Liability Insurance do you hold?

Enter your answer

15. What level of All Risks Insurance do you hold?

Enter your answer

16. What level of Plant Hire Insurance do you hold?

Enter your answer

17. What Health & Safety accreditations do you hold? (CHAS, SafeContractor, Constructionline (SSIP), SMAS, Acclaim, Altius, etc. *

Enter your answer

18. What Quality, Environmental & Management Systems accreditations do you hold? (ISO 9001 – quality management, ISO 14001 – environmental management, ISO 45001 – occupational health & safety management, ISO 27001 – information security, etc.) *

Enter your answer

19. What Trade/Competency Certifications do you hold? (CSCS Cards, CPCS / NPORS, NICEIC / Gas Safe / F-Gas / OFTEC, etc.) *

Enter your answer

20. What Corporate Responsibility / Supply Chain accreditations do you hold? (Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS), Social Value & Sustainability accreditations – e.g. BS 8903, Carbon Trust Standard, PAS 2080 etc.) *

Enter your answer

21. What Industry Bodies are you a member of? *

such as Trade Bodies, Professional Institutions, Regulatory Bodies, Skills Training, Advisory Bodies for Sustainability, Offsite Manufacturing, etc.

Enter your answer

Compatibility

Where you fit and how you operate

22. What Sectors do you work in?

- ☐ Residential
- ☐ Non-residential
- ☐ Public Sector
- ☐ Private Sector
- ☐ New build
- ☐ Retrofit

23. What is your role in the construction industry

- ○ Professional Body supporting the sector
- ○ A Supply Chain provider of materials or products
- ○ A Construction or Fabrication company

24. What are your unique selling points (USPs) or what areas do you excel in? *

Enter your answer

25. What kind of machines, equipment and tools do you use in your business? *

These next questions will help us connect you to the projects you either bid for alone or in partnership with another organisation. Select the sectors that are relevant to your business and then complete those sections

- ☐ Demolition, site clearance and recovery
- ☐ Material Preparation
- ☐ Assembly and Fabrication
- ☐ Finishing and Surface Treatment
- ☐ Quality Control and Testing
- ☐ Packaging and Storage
- ☐ Material Handling and Logistics

26. Demolition, site clearance and recovery?

- ○ Crushers
- ○ Screeners
- ○ Excavators
- ○ Shredders
- ○ Hazardous waste removal
- ○ Other

27. Material Preparation?

- [ ] Cutting machines (metal, timber, plastics, glass)
- [ ] Saws (band saws, panel saws, crosscut saws)
- [ ] Sheet metal guillotines
- [ ] Plasma cutters / Laser cutters
- [ ] Wood chippers / planers
- [ ] Other

28. Assembly and Fabrication?

- [ ] Welding equipment (MIG, TIG, spot welders)
- [ ] Screw/bolt/nail guns
- [ ] Hydraulic presses
- [ ] Fixtures and jigs (for consistency in modular builds)
- [ ] Robotic arms / automated fabrication lines
- [ ] Other

29. Finishing and Surface Treatment?

- ○ Painting and powder-coating booths
- ○ Sanding/polishing machines
- ○ CNC routers (for detailed finishes)
- ○ Edge banding machines (joinery work)
- ○ Other

30. Quality Control and Testing?

- ☐ Dimensional scanners / laser measurers
- ☐ Moisture meters (for timber)
- ☐ Electrical testers / circuit analyzers
- ☐ Pressure testers (for plumbing systems)
- ☐ Other

31. Packaging and Storage?

- ☐ Shrink wrapping machines
- ☐ Strapping tools
- ☐ Pallet wrapping machines
- ☐ Racking systems
- ☐ Barcoding & RFID systems
- ☐ Other

32. Material Handling and Logistics?

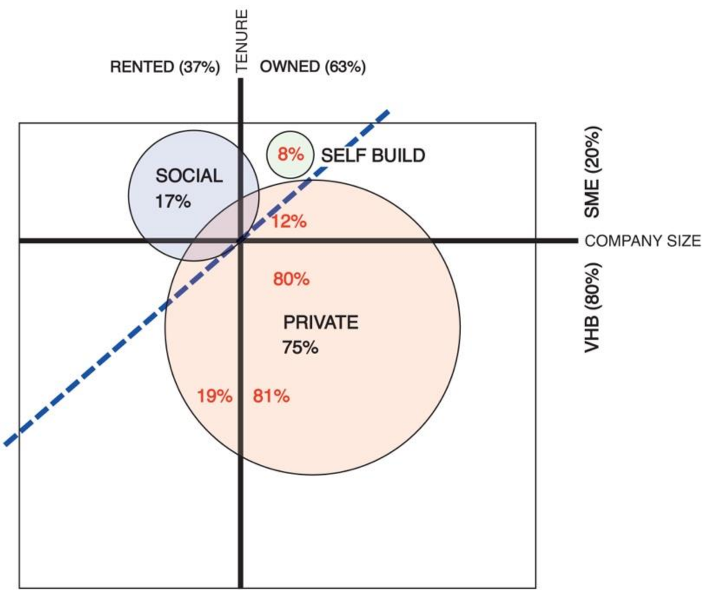
- ○ Overhead cranes
- ○ Conveyor belts
- ○ Forklifts / pallet jacks
- ○ Automated guided vehicles (AGVs)
- ○ Other

Appendix x: Procurer feedback

As with many government initiatives, the Procurement Act 2023 is primarily aimed at Public Sector procurement projects, with the hope that the private sector will follow suit at some point once the 'shift in culture' has been established. This is a pragmatic approach to Change Theory that starts where there will be the least resistance, or in this case, in the sector where it is easiest to dictate the changes being promoted.

Regionally, public sector procurement rests with our four Local Authorities. Our Universities are technically private sector organizations despite their considerable public funding and regulation, so sit between the LAs and the private sector Tier 1 companies in how we're approaching this. Because we're focused initially on the construction industry, Housing Associations are integral to how procurement works in this sector, and discussions were had with NCHA (Nottingham Community Housing Association) to better understand how they saw the issues around procuring from SMEs.

In this market there has been a drift towards fewer larger house builders and towards private sector provision over social housing from either LAs or Housing Associations.



SME builders have struggled to compete for tenders, largely due to the fact they don't have the profit from land banks to fall back on. Those that are managing to stay competitive do so by bringing small sites with planning permission to NHCA as a complete package. Tenders on the other hand only get answered by the larger developers who are familiar with the bidding process and have a department dedicated to applying for them.

Those larger developers, like tier one companies in general, can be based either within or outside our region and operate either regionally or nationally, making for four categorisations. To procure more locally, as they have all been encouraged to do through the Social Value Act 2012, many national companies have regional satellite offices, whilst some tier one companies based within the region may well operate extensively elsewhere, making location a less straightforward benchmark of regional benefit. The more critical factor is the value added by their involvement in the procurement process, or conversely, the degree to which their involvement disproportionately strips out the profit from the contract for the role they play. This 'institutionalised waste' is what simplifying and shortening our supply chains can potentially reduce.

Willmott Dixon is an example of a national developer with a strong regional presence and a commitment to procuring 85% of its contract value from SMEs. This is embedded in an ethos that reaches back to the 1970s and reflects a genuine belief in social and environmental value.

"It is easy for the company to concentrate solely on its proclaimed activity, with little or no reference to the environment and society of which it forms a part. At Willmotts we have, for a long time, recognised our responsibility to help wherever the advice or services of our employees can be of use. To this end, we provide aid, not only in financial terms, but also in the service of our employees to many organisations." Peter Willmott, 1978

Other national companies have set up satellite offices to improve their score when bidding for local projects, which means work for local SMEs, but still runs the risk of reducing the contract value disproportionately for the role they play if they are subcontracting out the whole project and only managing that process.

Disrupting this market therefore has two objectives: To localise the procurement process so that more work stays within the region and to reduce the hierarchical structure to ensure more of the project cost is left for delivering the works rather than being spent on managing overly complex contractual agreements. There are many small enterprises that have recognised the need for this bridge between procurers and SMEs providers who can be both lean and local in delivering the same service but for a fraction of the cost.

Some of these have been involved in the shaping of this platform to make sure it can integrate with those services being offered, and be used by them to reach more SMEs to either advise or become a collaborating partner on a bid. It is clear that their role is pivotal in how the procurement process can be streamlined to work more efficiently and economically and this platform needs to enhance that role, not replace it.

Go 4 Growth, Gill Askew.	https://go4growth.co.uk/
Efficiency East Midlands, Shannon Brown	https://eem.org.uk/
Roecliffe Marketing, Simon Bracewell	https://roecliffemarketing.com/
ARC Partnership, Chris Clarke	https://www.arc-partnership.co.uk/
Innoscope Ltd, James Butcher	https://www.emc-dnl.co.uk/our_members/innoscope-ltd/

Data gathered from Procurers from the questionnaire sent out was from too small a cohort to be of any relevance at this stage. Responses were also skewed towards those who are actively engaged with trying to procure more from regional SMEs, meaning for them at least the general statements being tested did not reflect their company ethos.

Appendix xi: Industry Body feedback

Construction Industry Bodies:

A taxonomy of Industry Support Bodies was developed that categorises these by the role they play in providing advice and information to SMEs. The aim is to involve all of the main providers so that all aspects of support are covered for the sector being targeted. Some of these will be generic to all sectors whereas others listed here are specific to the construction industry.

Those that have been contacted (in RED) to discuss the business model being proposed saw it as a viable solution to a known problem and have all helped to disseminate the questionnaire amongst their members. To progress this further however requires the support of EMCCA through endorsement of the platform to give it the credibility needed to ensure broader industry engagement.

Error! Reference source not found. **Taxonomy**

- Trade Bodies
- Professional Institutions
- Skills and Training Bodies
- Regulatory & Standards Bodies
-
- Umbrella & Cross-Sector Organisations
-
-
- Sustainability and Innovation Bodies
-
- Client and Procurement Groups
- Key Bodies Dedicated to Offsite / MMC

Trade Bodies

General Construction & Building

Federation of Master Builders (FMB) – Represents small to medium-sized building firms across the UK. Markel UK

National Federation of Builders **(NFB)** – One of the UK's longest-standing trade federations, connecting and scaling construction businesses since 1880. Builders

Home Builders Federation (HBF) – Represents private sector homebuilders in England and Wales.

Constructing Excellence – A platform for industry improvement through collaboration and innovation.NetRegs+16Build UK+16Wikipedia+16

Construction Industry Trade Alliance (CITA) – A UK trade association for the construction and building industry. cita.co.uk

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🧱 Materials, Products & Manufacturing

Construction Products Association (CPA) – Represents manufacturers and suppliers of construction products and materials. Construction Products Association+1NetRegs+1

Mineral Products Association (MPA) – Covers aggregates, cement, asphalt, and concrete producers. Markel UK+5Wikipedia+5hhcelcon.co.uk+5

Brick Development Association (BDA) – Represents the clay brick and paver industry.

British Woodworking Federation (BWF) – Represents the woodworking and joinery manufacturing industry. Wikipedia

British Adhesives and Sealants Association (BASA) – Represents the adhesives and sealants industry.

British Coatings Federation (BCF) – Represents the decorative, industrial, and powder coatings sectors.

British Aggregates Association (BAA) – Represents independent quarry operators.

Bathroom Manufacturers Association (BMA) – Represents bathroom product manufacturers.ibp.org.uk+3NetRegs+3Wikipedia+3

🔧 Specialist Trades & Services

National Federation of Demolition Contractors (NFDC) – Represents demolition contractors across the UK.

National Access and Scaffolding Confederation (NASC) – Represents scaffolding and access companies. Wikipedia

Structural Timber Association (STA) – Represents the structural timber industry.Planning, Building & Construction Today

Contract Flooring Association (CFA) – Represents the flooring industry.

British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association (BAFSA) – Promotes the use of automatic fire sprinkler systems.Planning, Building & Construction Today

British Urethane Foam Contractors Association (BUFCA) – Represents the spray foam industry.

Association for Specialist Fire Protection (ASFP) – Focuses on passive fire protection.

Fire Industry Association (FIA) – Represents the fire protection industry.Construction Products Association

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⚡ Building Services & Engineering

Building Engineering Services Association (BESA) – Represents building engineering services contractors. Construction Products Association

Electrical Contractors' Association (ECA) – Represents electrotechnical and engineering services companies. Wikipedia

Federation of Environmental Trade Associations (FETA) – Represents the heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration industry.NetRegs

British Electrotechnical and Allied Manufacturers Association (BEAMA) – Represents manufacturers of electrical infrastructure products.Wikipedia

Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering (CIPHE) – Represents plumbing and heating professionals.

🧰 Merchanting, Distribution & Supply Chain

Builders Merchants Federation (BMF) – Represents and supports builders' merchants and suppliers.hhcelcon.co.uk

British Constructional Steelwork Association (BCSA) – Represents the structural steelwork sector.Designing Buildings+6ibp.org.uk+6Construction Industry Council+6

British Adhesives and Sealants Association (BASA) – Represents the adhesives and sealants industry.

🧱 Sector-Specific & Niche Bodies

Glass & Glazing Federation (GGF) – Represents companies involved in glazing.

Guild of Architectural Ironmongers (GAI) – Represents architectural ironmongery professionals.

Guild of Builders and Contractors – Represents small to medium-sized building contractors.

Association of Project Safety (APS) – Focuses on health and safety risk management in construction.

National Association of Shopfitters (NAS) – Represents shopfitting and interior contracting companies.

📋 Umbrella & Cross-Sector Organisations

Build UK – Represents the contracting supply chain and promotes collaboration.

Construction Industry Council (CIC) – A representative forum for professional bodies in the construction industry.Wikipedia+3Construction Industry Council+3NetRegs+3

Construction Products Association (CPA) – Represents manufacturers and suppliers of construction products.

Professional Institutions

🏗 General Construction & Project Management

Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) – The world's largest and most influential professional body for construction management and leadership. CIOB+1Maxim Recruitment+1

Association for Project Management (APM) – The chartered body for the project profession, promoting project management across all sectors, including construction.

🧱 Architecture & Design

Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) – The UK's chartered body for architects, promoting excellence in architecture.

Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT) – Represents professionals specializing in architectural technology.CIOB

Chartered Society of Designers (CSD) – A professional body for designers across various disciplines, including architectural design.

📐 Surveying & Cost Management

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) – A global professional body promoting and enforcing the highest international standards in the valuation, management, and development of land, real estate, construction, and infrastructure.

Chartered Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors (CICES) – Specializes in civil engineering surveying and commercial management.

Institute of Clerks of Works and Construction Inspectorate (ICWCI) – Supports quality inspection professionals in construction. Maxim Recruitment

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🏗️ Engineering & Building Services

Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) – An independent professional association representing civil engineers worldwide. Maxim Recruitment

Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE) – Represents structural engineering professionals, promoting excellence in structural design.

Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) – Supports building services engineers in the UK and internationally.

Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE) – Represents mechanical engineers, including those in the construction sector.

Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) – A multidisciplinary professional engineering institution, covering electrical, electronic, manufacturing, and information systems sectors.

🚧 Transportation & Infrastructure

Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) – Focuses on transportation infrastructure and development.

Permanent Way Institution (PWI) – Caters to professionals involved in railway infrastructure.

🌿 Environment, Sustainability & Waste

Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM) – Supports professionals in water and environmental management.Wikipedia

Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM) – Represents waste management professionals.

🔧 Specialist & Cross-Disciplinary Bodies

Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE) – Represents building engineers, focusing on the design, construction, evaluation, and maintenance of buildings.

Society of Construction Law (SCL) – Aims to promote the study and understanding of construction law and its impact on the construction industry.

Institute of Workplace and Facilities Management (IWFM) – Supports workplace and facilities management professionals.

🏛️ **Umbrella & Collaborative Organisations**

Construction Industry Council (CIC) – The representative forum for professional bodies, research organizations, and specialist business associations in the UK construction industry. CIPHE+5Construction Industry Council+5Construction Industry Council+5

Skills and Training Bodies

🏛️ **National Skills & Training Authorities**

Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)
The primary industry training board for construction in the UK, offering funding, standards, and a national training directory. CITB

Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB)
Focuses on skills development in engineering construction, investing approximately £28 million annually to enhance skills across the industry. ECITB

Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE)
Develops and maintains occupational standards for apprenticeships and technical education. Wikipedia

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🧰 **Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) & Providers**

CITB Approved Training Organisations (ATOs)
A network of accredited providers delivering CITB-recognized training across the UK.

Workforce Skills Support
An accredited training provider offering a range of construction training courses nationwide. atsgroupuk.co.uk

Pragmatic Consulting
A CITB Approved Training Provider dedicated to delivering high-quality construction industry training. atsgroupuk.co.uk+2pragmatic-consulting.co.uk+2CITB+2

ATS Group UK
Provides accredited training across construction, highways, telecoms, energy, and utilities sectors. atsgroupuk.co.uk

Synergie Training (TTC Group)
Offers bespoke and accredited training courses for construction, civil engineering, and infrastructure projects. The TTC Group Home

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🏫 Colleges & Academic Institutions

Leeds College of Building
The UK's only specialist further education construction college, offering a wide range of courses from entry-level to degree programs. Wikipedia

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📚 Qualification & Certification Bodies

City & Guilds
Provides a variety of construction-related qualifications, including the Construction Skills (6219) suite, covering essential trades. City & Guilds

National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH)
Offers globally recognized qualifications in health, safety, environment, and wellbeing management. Wikipedia

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🧱 Specialist Training Networks & Groups

CITB Local and Specialist Training Groups
Regional and sector-specific groups that provide tailored training support to construction employers. CITB

CSR Training Providers Directory (Northern Ireland)
A directory of accredited training providers for the Construction Skills Register (CSR) scheme in Northern Ireland. cefni.co.uk+1Construction Plant-hire Association+1

Regulatory & Standards Bodies

🏛️ Regulatory Authorities

1. Building Safety Regulator (BSR)

Role: Established under the Building Safety Act 2022, the BSR oversees building safety in England, particularly for higher-risk buildings.

Responsibilities:

Regulates building control bodies and registered building inspectors.

Monitors compliance with building regulations.

Enforces safety standards in design, construction, and occupation of buildings.

Administered by: Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

More Info: HSE Building SafetyGOV.UK+2HSE+2HSE+2HSE+4GOV.UK+4GOV.UK+4

2. Construction Products Regulator

Role: Ensures that construction products placed on the UK market meet safety and performance requirements.

Responsibilities:

Oversees the UK marking system for construction products.

Enforces compliance with product safety regulations.

More Info: UK Government GuidanceGOV.UK

3. New Homes Ombudsman

Role: Provides a dispute resolution service for buyers of new homes, ensuring developers meet quality standards.

Responsibilities:

Investigates complaints about new home builders.

Mandates corrective actions and compensation where necessary.

More Info: Building Engineering Services AssociationDesigning Buildings

4. Local Authority Building Control (LABC)

Role: Local authorities' building control departments ensure compliance with building regulations.

Responsibilities:

Assess and approve building plans.

Inspect construction work.

Issue completion certificates.

More Info: Designing Buildings WikiDesigning Buildings+8Wikipedia+8constructionsiteskills.co.uk+8Designing Buildings+3GOV.UK+3DIY Doctor+3britassoc.org.uk+4Designing Buildings+4regulated-professions.service.gov.uk+4

5. Registered Building Control Approvers (RBCAs)

Role: Formerly known as Approved Inspectors, RBCAs are private sector entities authorized to carry out building control functions.

Responsibilities:

Provide building control services as an alternative to local authorities.

Ensure compliance with building regulations.

More Info: Qualitas ComplianceWikipedia+4qualitascompliance.com+4Designing Buildings+4

📏 **Standards and Certification Bodies**

6. British Standards Institution (BSI)

Role: The UK's National Standards Body, responsible for developing and publishing British Standards.

Responsibilities:

Develops standards to ensure quality, safety, and efficiency.

Represents the UK in international standardization bodies.

More Info: BSI Groupregulated-professions.service.gov.uk+5DIY Doctor+5Wikipedia+5

7. British Board of Agrément (BBA)

Role: Provides certification for construction products and systems, verifying their compliance with building regulations.

Responsibilities:

Issues Agrément Certificates for products and systems.

Conducts inspections and testing.

More Info: BBA

8. UK Technical Assessment Bodies (UKTABs)

Role: Authorized to issue UK Technical Assessments for construction products, facilitating UKCA marking.

Responsibilities:

Assess and verify the performance of construction products.

Issue assessments necessary for market access in Great Britain.

More Info: UK Government GuidanceGOV.UK

🧑‍⚖️ Professional Regulatory Bodies

9. Architects Registration Board (ARB)

Role: The statutory body regulating architects in the UK.

Responsibilities:

Maintains the Register of Architects.

Sets standards for education and practice.

Investigates complaints and enforces disciplinary actions.

More Info: ARB

10. Engineering Council

Role: The UK regulatory body for the engineering profession.

Responsibilities:

Licenses professional engineering institutions.

Maintains national registers of professional engineers and technicians.

More Info: Engineering Council

11. Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)

Role: Professional body for qualifications and standards in land, property, infrastructure, and construction.

Responsibilities:

Sets and enforces standards for chartered surveyors.

Provides accreditation and professional development.

More Info: RICS

🏠 Housing and Warranty Bodies

12. National House Building Council (NHBC)

Role: Provides warranties and insurance for new homes in the UK.

Responsibilities:

Sets technical standards for house construction.

Conducts inspections and quality assessments.

More Info: NHBCdunamisconstruction.co.uk

🔍 Additional Oversight and Enforcement

13. Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

Role: UK's regulator for workplace health and safety, including construction sites.

Responsibilities:

Enforces health and safety legislation.

Conducts inspections and investigations.

More Info: HSEHSE

14. Local Authorities

Role: Enforce planning permissions and building regulations at the local level.

Responsibilities:

Assess and approve planning applications.

Monitor compliance with building regulations.

Umbrella & Cross-Sector Organisations

🏗 Major Umbrella and Cross-Sector Organisations

1. Construction Leadership Council (CLC)

Role: Acts as the primary liaison between the UK government and the construction industry.

Focus Areas: Productivity, skills development, sustainability, and digital transformation.

Initiatives: Leads the "Construct Zero" programme, aiming to reduce carbon emissions in construction. TUCBurges Salmon

2. Construction Industry Council (CIC)

Role: Serves as a representative forum for professional bodies, research organisations, and specialist business associations in the UK construction industry.

Membership: Comprises over 500,000 professionals across various disciplines.

Initiatives: Launched "Diversitas" to enhance representation of Black professionals in the built environment. NetRegs+3Construction Industry Council+3EME Outlook Magazine+3Designing BuildingsConstruction Management+2Architectural Technology+2Construction Industry Council+2

3. Actuate UK

Role: An alliance of eight specialist engineering membership associations in the UK.

Focus Areas: Advocates for fair procurement, innovation, and the early involvement of specialist contractors in construction projects. Wikipedia

4. Construction Products Association (CPA)

Role: Represents UK manufacturers and distributors of construction products and materials.

Focus Areas: Policy advocacy, market intelligence, and promoting sustainable construction practices.NetRegs

5. Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS)

Role: A national initiative aimed at improving the image of the construction industry.

Focus Areas: Encourages best practices beyond statutory requirements, focusing on community, environment, and workforce.

6. Constructing Excellence

Role: A platform for industry improvement through collaboration and innovation.

Focus Areas: Promotes best practices, benchmarking, and knowledge sharing across the construction sector.causeway.com+2Construction Industry Council+2Burges Salmon+2

7. Association for Environment Conscious Building (AECB)

Role: A network promoting sustainable building practices in the UK.

Focus Areas: Develops standards and training programs for low-energy and low-carbon buildings. Wikipedia

8. UK Green Building Council (UKGBC)

Role: A membership organisation aiming to transform the UK's built environment towards sustainability.

Focus Areas: Advocates for sustainable practices in planning, design, construction, and operation of buildings. Wikipedia

9. Good Homes Alliance (GHA)

Role: A not-for-profit organisation promoting sustainable homes and communities.

Focus Areas: Works with architects, planners, developers, and other stakeholders to improve housing quality and sustainability. Wikipedia

10. Diversitas

Role: An umbrella body launched by the CIC to increase representation of Black professionals in the built environment.

Focus Areas: Enhances diversity and inclusion within the construction industry. Construction Industry Council+3Construction Industry Council+3Architectural Technology+3

Sustainability and Innovation Bodies

🌱 **Sustainability-Focused Organisations**

1. UK Green Building Council (UKGBC)

Role: A membership-led network transforming the sustainability of the built environment.

Key Initiatives:

Advancing Net Zero programme.

Net Zero Whole Life Carbon Roadmap.

Circular Economy Forum.

Nature-based solutions and biodiversity frameworks.

Membership: Over 660 organisations, including local authorities and innovative start-ups. UKGBC+2UKGBC+2constructioninnovationhub.org.uk+2

2. Good Homes Alliance (GHA)

Role: A not-for-profit community interest company promoting sustainable homes and communities.

Focus Areas:

Advocacy for near-zero carbon targets.

Emphasis on health, well-being, and quality in housing.

Education and awareness through seminars and research. WikipediaUKGBC+1Wikipedia+1

3. BRE (Building Research Establishment)

Role: Provides science-led training, standards, and advisory services to enhance building performance and sustainability.

Key Contributions:

Development of BREEAM, a leading sustainability assessment method.

Expert advice on achieving net-zero targets. UKGBC+3BRE Group+3constructioninnovationhub.org.uk+3

🧪 **Innovation and Research Bodies**

4. Construction Innovation Hub

Role: A collaboration between BRE, the Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC), and the Centre for Digital Built Britain (CDBB) to drive innovation in construction.

Focus Areas:

Development of the Product Platform Rulebook.

Enhancing productivity and performance in the sector.

Collaboration with over 600 organisations, including industry bodies and policymakers. constructioninnovationhub.org.uk

5. Innovate UK (UKRI)

Role: The UK's innovation agency, supporting business-led innovation in all sectors, including construction.

Initiatives:

Funding for modern methods of construction.

Decarbonisation projects and sustainable building innovations. Innovate UK Business Connect

6. Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC)

Role: Assists government and industry in adopting advanced manufacturing to drive innovation, efficiency, and sustainability in construction.

Contributions:

Integration of digital technologies and offsite construction methods.

Collaboration on projects to enhance construction productivity. The MTC+1constructioninnovationhub.org.uk+1

🏗️ Industry Associations Promoting Sustainability and Innovation

7. Construction Products Association (CPA)

Role: Represents UK manufacturers and distributors of construction products and materials.

Key Activities:

Promotion of offsite construction methods.

Advocacy for digitalised manufacturing processes.

Addressing sustainability challenges in the construction products industry. Construction Products Association+1reuters.com+1

8. British Standards Institution (BSI)

Role: Develops and publishes standards to drive innovation and sustainability in the built environment.

Impact:

Provides frameworks for best practices in construction.

Enhances consistency and accountability across the industry. BSI

Client and Procurement Groups

🏢 Public Sector Procurement Framework Providers

These entities offer pre-tendered frameworks to streamline procurement for public sector construction projects:SCAPE

SCAPE Group

Role: Public sector-owned procurement specialist.

Services: Provides frameworks for construction, consultancy, civil engineering, and utilities.

Focus: Emphasizes efficiency, sustainability, and social value in project delivery.

Website: scape.co.ukSCAPE

LHC Procurement Group

Role: Not-for-profit provider of procurement solutions.

Services: Offers frameworks for building, refurbishing, and maintaining social housing and public properties.

Focus: Aims to improve lives and places through quality procurement solutions.

Website: lhcprocure.org.uklhcprocure.org.uk+3lhcprocure.org.uk+3swpa.org.uk+3

Consortium Procurement Construction (CPC)

Role: Facilitates procurement for social housing and public sector projects.

Services: Provides frameworks for construction, refurbishment, and maintenance.

Focus: Enhances efficiency and cost-effectiveness in public sector procurement.

Website: cpconstruction.org.uklhcprocure.org.uk+3cpconstruction.org.uk+3swpa.org.uk+3Financial Times+6lhcprocure.org.uk+6lhcprocure.org.uk+6tradogram.com+8Financial Times+8swpa.org.uk+8

South West Procurement Alliance (SWPA)

Role: Regional procurement body serving South West England.

Services: Offers compliant frameworks for construction and maintenance of public sector buildings.

Focus: Supports local authorities and social landlords in efficient procurement.

Website: swpa.org.ukDepartment of Finance+5swpa.org.uk+5lhcprocure.org.uk+5

Procure Partnerships

Role: Procurement and delivery specialist within the built environment sector.

Services: Provides frameworks for public sector organisations to deliver construction projects.

Focus: Emphasizes proactive, effective, and robust procurement methods.

Website: procurepartnerships.co.ukConstructing Excellence+2Procure Partnerships Framework+2NetRegs+2

🏛️ Government and Strategic Client Groups

These groups represent major infrastructure clients and influence procurement strategies at the national level:

Infrastructure Client Group (ICG)

Role: Brings together UK economic infrastructure clients in partnership with government and industry.

Purpose: Leads the acceleration of improvement and alignment in the delivery and development of UK infrastructure.

Focus: Emphasizes benchmarking, sharing best practices, and providing a unified voice to government.

Website: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infrastructure_Client_GroupWikipedia

Construction Steering Group (Local Government Association)

Role: Organized by the LGA, this group brings together senior procurement professionals from local government across England.

Purpose: Facilitates collaboration and knowledge sharing among local authorities on construction procurement.

Website: local.gov.ukLocal Government Association

Government Construction Strategy Task Groups

Role: Established to support delivery of objectives identified in the Government Construction Strategy.

Focus: Includes the Procurement/Lean Client Task Group, aiming to deliver cost savings and improve procurement models.

Website: gov.ukGOV.UK+1GOV.UK+1 156

🏗️ Industry-Led Procurement Forums

These organisations advocate for best practices and innovation in construction procurement:

Constructing Excellence Procurement Group

Role: Promotes collaborative working and procurement best practices in construction.

Focus: Develops guidance and supports the adoption of innovative procurement models.

Website: constructingexcellence.org.uk

Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA)

Role: Represents civil engineering contractors in the UK.

Focus: Advocates for procurement reform and addresses challenges in construction procurement processes.

Website: ceca.co.uk

Key Bodies Dedicated to Offsite / MMC

1. Buildoffsite

Role: Industry-led membership organisation to promote offsite and pre-manufactured construction.

Activities: Working groups, innovation promotion, client guides, events.

Website: buildoffsite.com

2. Offsite Hub *(formerly Offsite Magazine)*

Role: Information platform for offsite news, case studies, innovation, and suppliers.

Supported by: Radar Communications.

Website: offsitehub.co.uk

3. BOPAS (Buildoffsite Property Assurance Scheme)

Role: Accreditation scheme providing long-term assurance (typically 60 years) on MMC construction quality.

Developed by: BLP Insurance, Lloyd's Register, BRE, and Buildoffsite.

Website: bopas.org

4. MPA Precast (part of the Mineral Products Association)

Role: Represents the UK precast concrete sector (a key offsite system).

Website: precast.org.uk

5. Modular and Portable Building Association (MPBA)

Role: Represents manufacturers and suppliers of modular and portable buildings.

Activities: Training, advocacy, technical guidance.

Website: mpba.biz

🧱 **Construction Innovation Bodies with Strong MMC Focus**

6. Construction Innovation Hub

MMC Focus: Developed the **Platform Design for Manufacture and Assembly (P-DfMA)** and product platform rulebook.

Partners: BRE, MTC, CDBB.

Website: constructioninnovationhub.org.uk

7. MTC (Manufacturing Technology Centre)

MMC Role: Focuses on industrialised construction, automation, robotics in construction.

Website: the-mtc.org

🏛️ Government & Standards Groups with MMC Programmes

8. Homes England – MMC Framework

Role: Government-backed procurement framework to increase MMC adoption in housing.

Includes: Volumetric and panelised systems.

Website: gov.uk/homes-england

9. NHBC Accepts

Role: Certification and approval process for MMC systems to help achieve mortgage and warranty compliance.

Run by: NHBC (National House Building Council).

Website: nhbc.co.uk/accepts

📊 Additional Supporting Bodies & Programmes

10. Construction Leadership Council (CLC) – MMC Workstream

Role: Strategic leadership for accelerating MMC adoption in the UK.

Includes: Procurement models, standards alignment.

11. Centre for Offsite Construction + Innovative Structures (University of Brighton)

Academic hub: Conducts research and works with industry on MMC design and performance.

Appendix xii: The Platform demonstrator

EMCCA Collaborative Commerce Marketplace (CCM) Prototype Report

developed by cbit@ntu.ac.uk

Summary

The EMCCA Collaborative Commerce Marketplace (CCM) prototype has been developed by the Centre for Business and Industry Transformation (CBIT) at Nottingham Business School (NBS) as a tailored digital hub to transform procurement and strengthen the East Midlands economy for inclusive growth. By integrating AI-powered tools, the platform enables SMEs to access tenders, showcase skills, and collaborate to secure contracts. Helping them expand opportunities, create jobs, and drive sustainable regional economic growth. This report summarises the work completed to date and highlights the impact of the prototype's four core functions: ***Access***, filter and centralises tenders into a single hub; ***Profiling***, using AI to extract, standardise and customize SME skills; ***Matching***, intelligently aligning supplier capabilities with tender requirements; and ***Collaboration***, enabling SMEs to form Virtual Organisations for collaboration to jointly pursue larger contracts.

Prototype Development

A fully functional prototype has been designed, developed and tested, with a strong emphasis on user experience and core functionality. The system integrates tender feeds, SME profiling, and AI-driven analysis into a single, coherent platform.

From a technical perspective, the prototype has been developed using a modern technology stack, including React for the front-end interface, Java for the back-end services, and TypeScript (TSC) for robust, type-safe application logic. This combination ensures scalability, maintainability, and performance, while also supporting rapid iteration and future integration with regional procurement systems.

Early testing indicates that the solution has the potential to substantially increase SME participation in procurement by simplifying processes, improving transparency, and creating more connected supply chains.

Access – Centralised Tender Hub

The prototype successfully aggregates more than 200 tenders each day into a unified regional hub. This centralisation enables SMEs to seamlessly access opportunities through a single, streamlined interface rather than searching across multiple fragmented platforms. SMEs benefit from greater transparency, reduced search time, and improved visibility of opportunities, encouraging wider participation in procurement processes.

Profiling – AI-Powered Competence Extraction

An AI engine automatically extracts SME competencies, certifications, and skills from company data, creating standardised digital profiles. () In addition, the extraction process can be refined or supplemented through manual input, allowing companies to customise and validate their profiles to ensure accuracy and reflect unique strengths. This functionality could also be further enhanced in future versions, enabling even greater flexibility and personalisation of profiles. These profiles highlight capabilities rather than solely past performance, and the system also benchmarks each company against relevant criteria within the platform. As a result, administrative burdens for SMEs are reduced, while procurers gain access to reliable, structured data that reveals hidden competencies and comparative strengths within the regional economy.

Matching – Intelligent Tender Alignment

The AI-powered matching capability connects SME profiles with tender requirements. During prototype testing, more than 500 matches have already been generated, demonstrating both accuracy and scalability. SMEs can more easily identify realistic opportunities, while procurers can rapidly identify relevant suppliers, leading to more efficient procurement outcomes.

Collaboration – Virtual Organisation Builder

The platform enables SMEs to combine their competencies into Virtual Organisations, allowing them to jointly compete for contracts that exceed the capacity of a single business. This function promotes collaboration over competition, strengthens regional supply chains, and improves resilience while keeping value within the East Midlands economy.

Outcomes of the Prototype

The prototype has confirmed the technical feasibility of AI-powered procurement support. It provides an accessible, user-friendly interface that lowers digital barriers for SMEs, regardless of technical expertise. If endorsed by EMCCA, the system will demonstrate a viable foundation for a regional procurement hub and proves that long-standing barriers to SME engagement can be significantly reduced. () Importantly, the platform is designed with a sustainable business model and revenue-generation pathway, ensuring it can operate independently without ongoing EMCCA funding or taxpayer support. Potential revenue streams include SME subscriptions for enhanced visibility and analytics, tiered access for procurers to advanced search and benchmarking tools, and partnership opportunities with industry bodies to integrate sector-specific services. This approach ensures long-term financial viability whilst maintaining affordability and accessibility for SMEs.

Future Work

The current prototype demonstrates that AI-powered procurement support is both feasible and impactful. However, its present scope represents only the foundation of what can be achieved. With *further development and investment*, the EMCCA-CCM platform can be expanded into a regional flagship initiative that directly advances EMCCA's priorities of inclusive growth, regional skills development, sustainability, and local supply chain resilience.

1. SME Growth and Readiness

Establish stronger connections with regional business support organisations (Growth Hubs, Chambers of Commerce, universities) to provide targeted recommendations on improving SME profiles. Enable SMEs to identify and close gaps in competencies, certifications, or sustainability credentials, ensuring they are better prepared for procurement opportunities. Strengthen SME participation in priority sectors for the East Midlands, including advanced manufacturing, construction, green technologies, and digital industries.

2. Skills and Workforce Development

Integrate with local training providers and skills academies to recommend tailored upskilling and certification pathways. Track workforce development across SMEs to provide EMCCA with insights that inform regional skills strategies. Support apprenticeships, reskilling, and career progression by linking procurement opportunities to workforce requirements.

3. Supply Chain Resilience and Collaboration

Enhance the Virtual Organisation Builder to allow SMEs to collaborate at scale on larger and more complex projects. Encourage cross-sector partnerships to retain value within the East Midlands and build stronger local supply chains. Provide visibility into regional supply chain structures, highlighting vulnerabilities and opportunities for local substitution.

4. Sustainability and Net Zero Alignment

Embed green procurement indicators into SME profiles and tender matching, driving environmentally responsible practices. Guide SMEs towards recognised sustainability standards, supporting EMCCA's climate and net zero objectives. Deliver regional insights into the contribution of procurement to environmental targets and sustainable growth.

5. Data-Driven Insights for Policy and Strategy

Provide advanced analytics dashboards to give EMCCA real-time intelligence on SME engagement, supply chain resilience, and economic trends. Identify systemic barriers to procurement participation, enabling targeted interventions and evidence-based policymaking. Advanced benchmark progress against EMCCA's economic strategies, creating transparency and accountability.

6. Trusted Group Matching

For SMEs that already operate within established consulting groups or business alliances, the platform will incorporate group-level analysis. It will assess both individual and collective competencies within these trusted groups and match them against tender requirements. This functionality will recognise the existing trust and collaboration among group members, enabling faster and more accurate tender responses while maximising the group's combined strengths.

Funding Rationale

The EMCCA-CCM prototype provides a strong foundation, but additional development will unlock far greater value. With sustained support, the platform will contribute to inclusive and local growth by:

- Enabling more SMEs to win contracts, generating local jobs and economic growth.
- Building resilient supply chains that strengthen the regional economy.
- Advancing EMCCA's priorities in skills, green growth, and innovation.
- Equiping policymakers with the tools and data to deliver effective, inclusive, and sustainable regional development policies.
- Represent an opportunity for EMCCA to establish a strategic digital asset that not only removes long-standing barriers to SME procurement but also drives long-term competitiveness and prosperity for the East Midlands.

Conclusion

The EMCCA-CCM prototype has already demonstrated clear and measurable impact. By centralising access to tenders, profiling SME skills and competencies, and intelligently matching opportunities by enabling collaboration, the platform provides a practical and scalable solution to long-standing procurement barriers. With continued support from EMCCA and potentially SME business associations, it can now be developed into a trusted regional hub that not only unlocks opportunities and strengthens supply chains. But also strengthens advanced benchmarking of SME capabilities, supports connecting organisations, and drives inclusive, sustainable growth across the East Midlands economy.

YEAR
2025

PROJECT
A joint project between Nottingham Trent University, Centre for Business and Industry Transformation (CBIT), Bolsover District Council and the East Midlands Combined County Authority

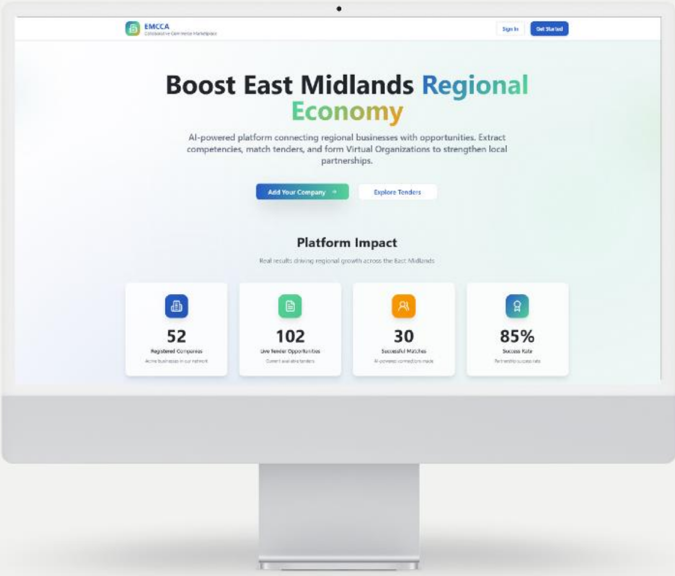
EMCCA
Collaborative Commerce Marketplace

A customised platform for EMCCA, designed to support supply chains, SMEs, and the procurement process.

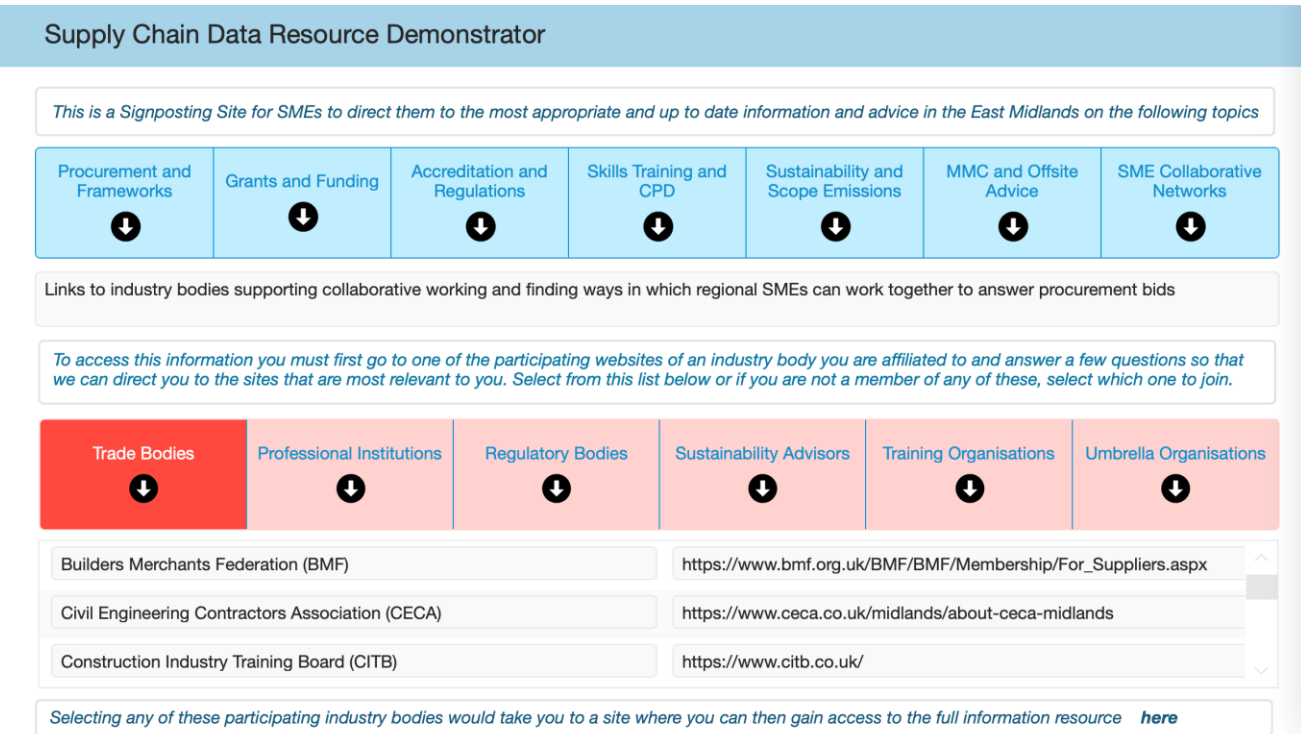
PROJECT PROTOTYPE

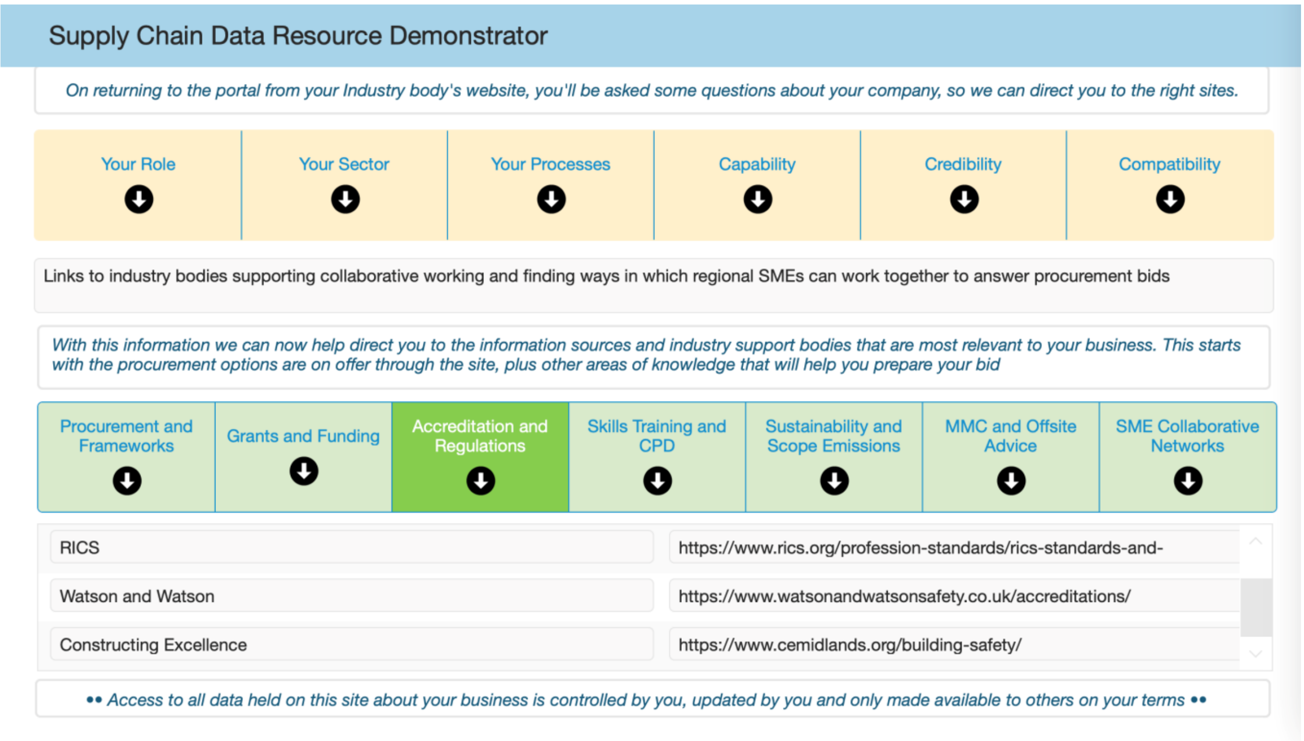
cbitinnovationhub.lovable.app

Click here



Front end interface demonstrator

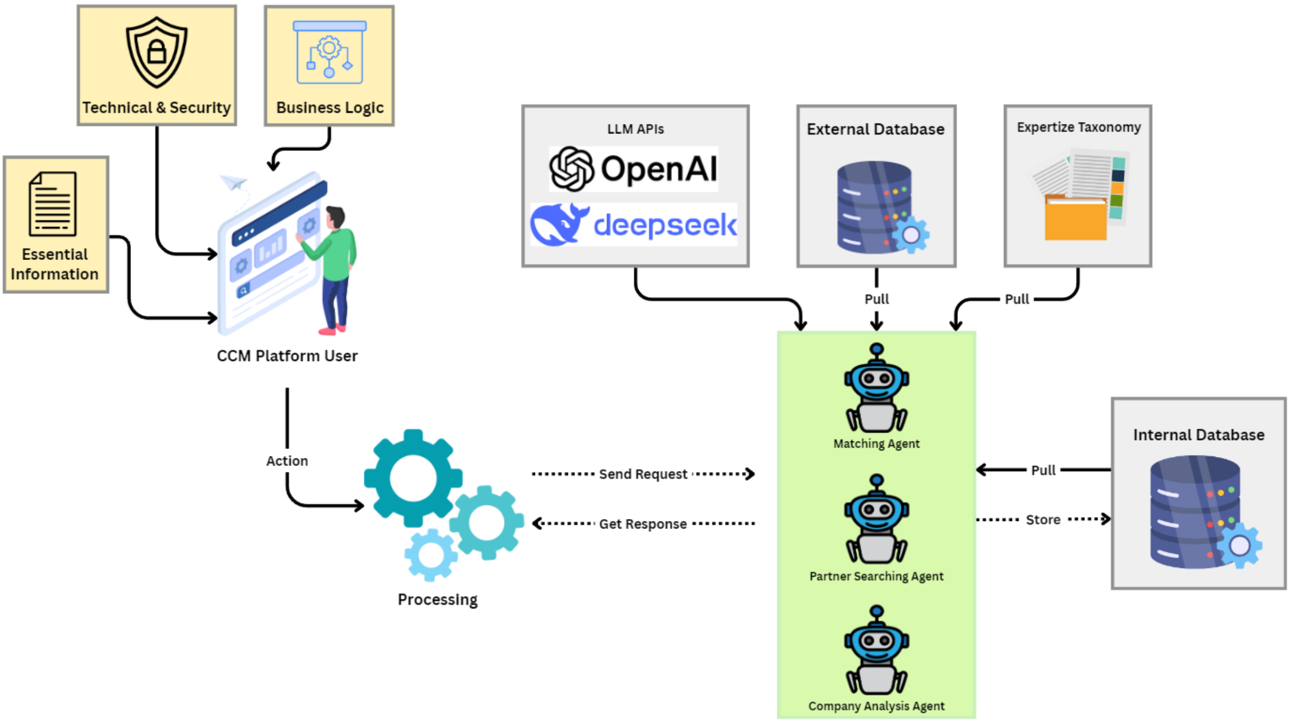




The full platform will incorporate this front end interface with the back-end functionality that connects multi-source data with intelligent filtering to generate actionable insights.

This schematic illustrates how the system aggregates and filters data:

- Users provide essential information through a secure interface, with **business logic** representing the operational logic of the company—defining what the company does.
- The platform integrates with LLM APIs (OpenAI, DeepSeek) and pulls data from external databases, expertise taxonomies, and internal records.
- Three AI agents—Matching, Partner Searching, and Company Analysis—process and filter the information, storing enriched results internally.
- The system then delivers tailored matches, partnership options, and company analysis back to the user.


Technical & Security
Business Logic
Essential Information
CCM Platform User
Action
Processing
Send Request
Get Response
LLM APIs
OpenAI
deepseek
External Database
Expertize Taxonomy
Pull
Pull
Matching Agent
Partner Searching Agent
Company Analysis Agent
Internal Database
Pull
Store

Planning Capacity Builder for Net Zero

Date: 23rd May

Authors: Professor Richard Bull (NTU) and Sarah Kay (Bolsover District Council)

1. Introduction

The Proposal

Nottingham Trent University (NTU) and Bolsover District Council (BDC) were successful in their bid to the East Midlands Investment Zone Sprint to explore the development of a new planning qualification. EMCCA has ambitions to see the East Midlands be recognised as a national centre of excellence for green technology investment and to see growth underpinned by a commitment to Net Zero. The recruitment and retention of planners in local planning authorities is a barrier to these regional ambitions and growth in the East Midlands Investment Zone. This innovative project set out to explore the feasibility of creating a pathway into the planning profession through a Level 4 apprenticeship in Town and Country Planning that would create more opportunities for our young people to access higher skilled and higher paid jobs. The Level 4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship is a new standard that is currently only offered in Chichester.

NTU received £45,521 to undertake Phase 1 of the project, a feasibility study with the following activity planned.

- An initial market analysis and 1st stage initial course design before working with BDC on employer engagement
- Employer engagement to test the course design and appetite
- Develop a final course structure and proposal and decide as to whether to launch the programme in the future (as part of Phase 2)
- Phase 2 of the Project – to be agreed in May 2025 – would be to decide whether to proceed with the delivery of a Level 4 apprenticeship with an anticipated minimum cohort of 12 apprentices.

In 2023 the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) published their State of Profession 2023 report[1], detailing an analysis of the current planning profession. That report indicated that planning backlogs, underfunding of local authority planning departments, and a labour shortages of planning professionals were challenges the planning system faced. In July 2024 the new Government announced plans to boost house building in the UK, creating a least 1.5million new homes over the next 5 years[2]. Such an ambitious and radical plan would inevitably compound the professions current challenges, meaning all avenues and initiatives to grow the pool of planning professionals must be explored.

The Government is committed to boost capacity in the planning system with a manifesto target of recruiting 300 new Planners by 2026, and whilst level 7-degree apprenticeship initiatives had been promoted by the Local Government Association’s (LGA) Pathways to Planning programme[3] to start to achieve that target many local planning authorities report that this is not enough[4]. Therefore, the partnership between NTU and BDC recognised an opportunity looking towards the level 4 apprenticeship route to bolster these numbers and provide an entry level route into the planning profession.

This report details the activities undertaken by NTU and BDC. The report is structured as follows, first the market analysis is presented before, second, details and findings from the stakeholder engagement are

[1] RTPI | State of the Profession 2023
[2] Letter from the Deputy Prime Minister to local authorities Leaders in England: Playing your part in building the homes we need
[3] Pathways to Planning | Local Government Association
[4] How realistic is Labour's plan to recruit 300 new planners? | The Planner

presented. Thirdly, our approach to course design and an overview of the L4 apprenticeship is presented before finally, offering our conclusions and next steps.

2. Initial market analysis

The first part of the project was to understand the market demand for apprenticeships relating to town planning and NTU instigated a detailed market analysis for the Level 4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship. The Standard was approved for delivery in June 2001, with a typical duration to gateway of 24 months not including the End Point Assessment (EPA) period and maximum funding of £12,000. The standard aligns with the following Royal Town Planning Institute professional recognition: Upon successful completion of the apprenticeship standard and following a period of relevant experience, an application for Associate membership of the RTPI can be made

The trailblazer group comprises the following organisations:

- East Suffolk Council
- CBRE Edgars Ltd
- Basildon Council
- Indigo Planning
- Savills
- Greater Cambridge Shared Planning
- South Cambridgeshire District Council
- St Albans City & District Council
- Brighton & Hove City Council
- Winchester City Council

The Occupation Summary is as follows: Town Planning Assistants work in various sectors, including planning, construction, architecture, infrastructure, environment, and local government. They may be employed by local authorities, consultancies, central government, or other planning organizations. Their primary role is to support Chartered Town Planners by providing technical and administrative assistance to facilitate new developments and create sustainable places. This involves helping the public and clients understand the planning system and its requirements, conducting site visits, researching site history, and performing initial site analyses. They also assist with community engagement, manage planning applications under supervision, and ensure compliance with relevant legislation and environmental designations.

Town Planning Assistants work under the supervision of Chartered Town Planners for more complex analysis and assessment tasks, including writing reports and processing major planning applications. They are expected to manage their workload to meet deadlines and adhere to health, safety, and environmental considerations. They must be willing to travel for site visits and interact with a wide range of stakeholders, including Chartered Town Planners, developers, clients, the public, local councillors, and various specialists such as architects and surveyors. They are responsible for their own work, which includes preliminary research, analysis of policy documents, case law, planning legislation, and site history, and making recommendations to Chartered Town Planners. Additionally, they must adhere to the Royal Town Planning Institute's Code of Professional Conduct and their employer's code of conduct. The role is diverse, combining office-based tasks with meetings and site visits.

At the time of writing (May 2025) Chichester College is the only provider running the apprenticeship. It has 44 starts on the course up until the end of 2024. Details on the course at Chichester can be found on their website[5] which seems to indicate that the course is taught on campus on a block release basis. It also seems that there are two start dates per year, January and April. See Figure 1 below.

[5] https://www.chichester.ac.uk/courses/town-planning-assistant-level-4-apprenticeship-standard/

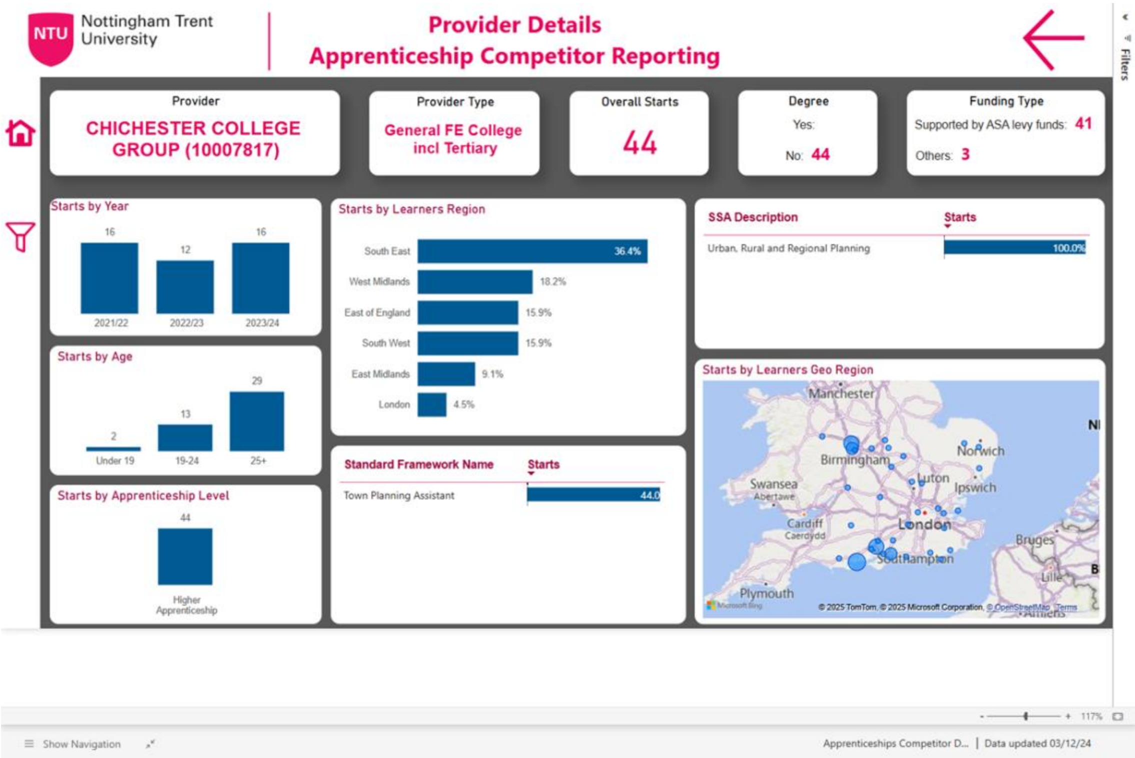


Figure 1: Details of the Chichester College L4 Apprenticeship.

Our analysis shows that all the delivery is in the Southeast, where most apprentices are also located. However, 19 (nearly half) are from the East Midlands, West Midlands and East of England, so within our potential catchment. Of the four East Midlands apprentices, one is from Leicester, one from Harborough and two from Northamptonshire. Course starts by year to date are 21/22 – 16, 22/23 – 12, 23/24 – 16 and the age profile of the apprentices is predominantly over 25. 41 of the apprentices are working for levy paying organisations – most likely local authorities, although not exclusively, which may imply that the other three are in small private sector organisations. Currently, Chichester is the only training provider offering this apprenticeship, and there is no evidence of any others looking to enter the market. This could be due to low demand, exemplified by thee being only 44 starts to date, however this number could be due to the geographic location of Chichester for in person, albeit block release, course delivery. The opportunity for a course delivered from a more central location in the country, may therefore provide for greater take up and, as can be seen below, demand could be on the increase.

The demand for town planning assistant jobs tends to be stable, with consistent growth driven by urbanisation, environmental concerns, and the ongoing development of infrastructure and housing. Town planning is a key part of local government, urban design firms, environmental consultancies, and other sectors, and town planners—particularly assistants—are needed to support the planning process. Factors driving demand include:

- *Urban Growth:* As populations grow and more people move to cities or towns, there is an increasing need for town planners to design and manage development effectively. This leads to a demand for planning assistants to help with research, assessments, and drafting documents.
- *Housing and Infrastructure Development:* Housing shortages in certain areas and government initiatives to build new homes and improve infrastructure (roads, transport, utilities) can create opportunities in planning and development. Planning assistants often help manage these projects from a local level.

- *Environmental Sustainability:* Increasing awareness of environmental concerns such as climate change, green space, and sustainable development is driving the need for planners to incorporate eco-friendly designs into development projects. Town planning assistants may play a role in researching and implementing sustainability practices.
- *Regulations and Policy Changes:* New laws, regulations, and policies (such as zoning changes, environmental regulations, and transportation planning) frequently arise, and local governments and private organizations need planning assistants to help with compliance and ensuring that development projects meet all necessary criteria.
- *Local Government and Public Sector Employment*: Local governments are often the largest employers of town planners. Many town planning assistant roles exist within these organizations, which manage land use, public services, and development in their communities.
- *Urban Regeneration Projects:* Town planners are crucial in urban regeneration projects aimed at revitalizing rundown or underdeveloped areas. These projects often require detailed planning, and assistants are needed to manage tasks like mapping, surveying, and preparing reports.

While the demand for town planning assistants may vary by region, major cities and urban areas typically offer more opportunities due to ongoing urbanisation. However, the growing focus on environmental sustainability and the need for balanced urban development means the field is expected to continue offering opportunities across a range of employment sectors:

- *Local Government:* Local authorities need planning assistants to help with policy development, public consultations, and planning applications.
- *Private Firms:* Urban planning, architecture, and consultancy firms often hire planning assistants to support their projects and help with research and planning tasks.
- *Environmental and Sustainability Agencies:* As sustainability becomes a bigger focus in development, agencies may need planning assistants to help implement green projects. Construction and development Companies: These companies also rely on planning assistants to ensure that projects comply with local regulations and zoning laws.

Market

- East Midlands local planning authorities – 37
- Local planning authorities outside of the East Midlands but adjacent to, including South Yorkshire, N/NE Lincolnshire, Staffordshire
- Planning consultants in the East Midlands – 15 (according to RTPI search) Some are SME's but others are national multidisciplinary organisations, e.g. Arup
- The proposed employer consultation workshops will not only assist in the prospective course's development, but can also provide an opportunity to gauge interest and demand from our target employers

Summary

NTU analysed the Level 4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship, approved for delivery in June 2021 with a 24-month duration (excluding EPA) and £12,000 maximum funding. It aligns with Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Associate membership eligibility upon completion and experience. The apprenticeship, supported by a trailblazer group of public and private planning organisations, prepares individuals to support Chartered Town Planners across sectors like local government, infrastructure, and environmental planning. Responsibilities include site visits, public engagement, research, and managing planning applications under supervision, adhering to RTPI and employer codes of conduct.

Currently, Chichester College is the sole provider, offering block-release campus delivery with two intakes per year (January and April). As of the end of 2024, there were 44 starts, with most delivery in the Southeast, though 19 apprentices come from the East Midlands and surrounding regions—NTU's potential catchment. Most learners are over 25 and from levy-paying employers. Despite this modest uptake, demand for planning assistants remains stable and growing, driven by urbanisation, housing needs, infrastructure development, and environmental sustainability goals. Employment opportunities exist in local authorities, consultancies, construction, and environmental agencies.

A centrally located delivery option, like one from NTU, could increase participation. Alongside the course development the next stage of the project was to undertake stakeholder engagement and employer consultation to both help shape the course and assess market demand in the East Midlands and adjacent areas.

3. Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement was key to this project. For several years NTU has been approached by various bodies to explore the viability of town planning qualifications. For the course to be viable NTU and Bolsover needed to be clear that there is a market, and that any course that would be delivered would meet the needs of the local planning community. Stakeholder engagement is also integral to NTU's course approval processes. A three-part approach to stakeholder engagement was agreed:

1. *Part 1:* A public webinar to explore the wider challenges of planning and gauge general interest in the proposal. This would enable us to test the market and gather a pool of interested stakeholders who may be interested in helping develop the course and potentially take on future apprentices.
2. *Part 2:* An invitation only meeting with interested parties to contribute to the course design.
3. *Part 3:* A formal course approval event that would include external stakeholders plus students and the required NTU participants to sign off the course design.

Part 1 – Public Webinar: Planning for Net Zero

An interactive webinar hosted by NTU and Bolsover District Council was held on 13th March to look at the solutions to address recruitment and retention issues in local planning authorities and explore the challenges of the region relating to planning and Net Zero. This was a public event that was promoted via LinkedIn and the partners various networks.

Below is the invitation that was used. It was hosted on-line.

EMMCA has ambitions to see the East Midlands be recognised as a national centre of excellence for green technology investment and to see growth underpinned by a commitment to Net Zero. The recruitment and retention of planners in local planning authorities is a barrier to these regional ambitions and growth in the East Midlands Investment Zone.

You are invited to attend a webinar to explore the challenges of planning within the region and to discuss NTU's proposal to address these challenges through exploring the feasibility of launching a new Level 4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship.

This innovative project aims to explore the feasibility of creating a pathway into the planning profession through a Level 4 Apprenticeship in Town and Country Planning creating more opportunities for our young people to access higher skilled and higher paid jobs.

This webinar is open to local authorities, policy makers and planning consultancies.

Contributors to include:

- *Professor Richard Bull. Deputy Dean, School of Architecture, Design and the Built Environment. NTU*
- *Andrew Grayson MRTPI. Planning Adviser, National Trust (Midlands and East of England)*
- *David Walker, Principal Lecturer, School of Architecture, Design and the Built Environment. NTU*
- *Sarah Kay MRTPI. Assistant Director of Planning & Planning Policy. Bolsover District Council*
- *Sam Maher, Director of HR, Learning and Development, East Midlands Council*

The session was well attended by a range of stakeholders. 43 people signed up from a range of organisations that included local authorities such as South Derbyshire, Amber Valley, Broxtowe alongside private sector planning consultancies and interested individuals. 33 people attended the event which covered an introduction to NTU & the School of Architecture, Design and the Built Environment, an overview of the regional context including EMCCA alongside a discussion around the shortage of planners. A high-level overview of our proposal was then presented before am open conversation around determining the need for a new apprenticeship. We asked the following questions:

- What do you see as the main challenges for planning in the region?
- What do you see as the barriers for trying to recruit planners?
- What would be the key features of the course you'd be looking for and any additional features?
- Would your organisation be interested in this apprenticeship for your staff, or to recruit people on to it?

Word clouds of the responses are shown below:

Figure 2 What do you see as the main challenges for planning in the region?

Figure 3: What do you see as the barriers for trying to recruit planners?

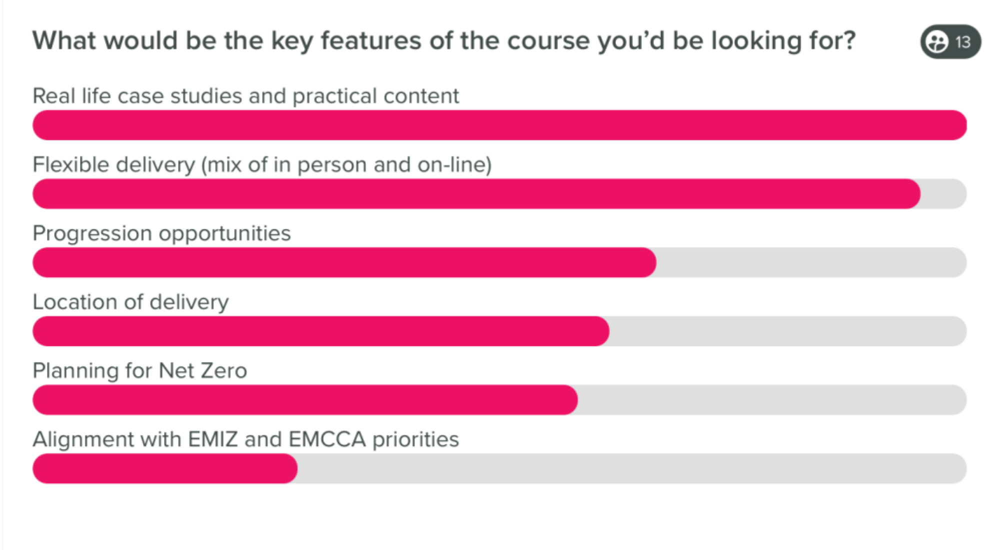


Figure 4: What would be the key features of the course you'd be looking for?

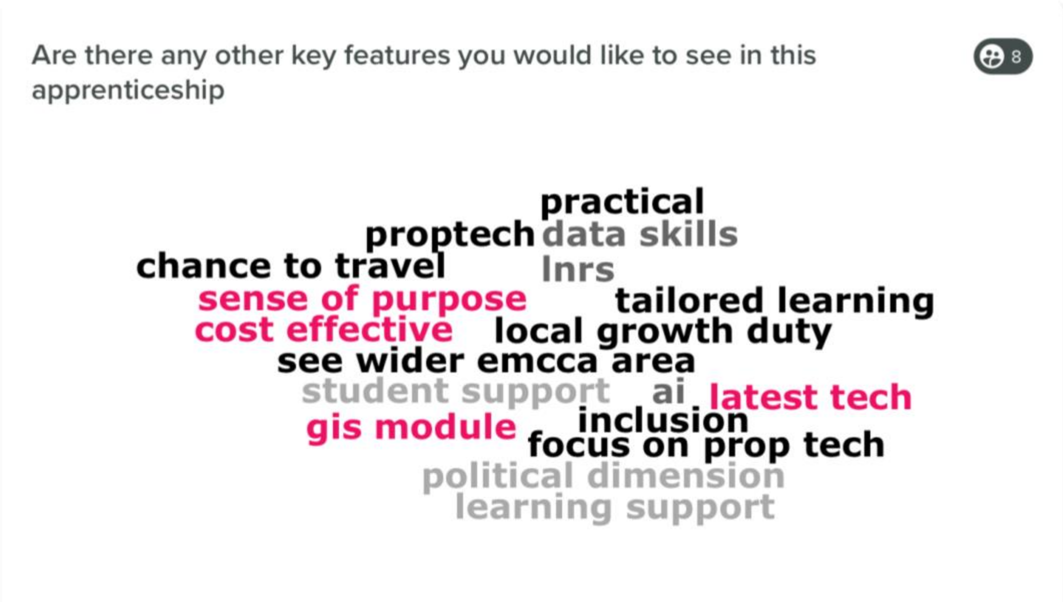


Figure 5: Are there any other key features you would like to see in this apprenticeship?

The findings were not especially surprising for the project team. Barriers around recruiting and retaining planners are well known but it was useful confirmation. It was surprising to see Net Zero and EMMCA priorities feature lower down the priority list but that may not necessarily mean they are not valued, but that the immediate practical planning priorities local authorities simply take precedence. It is indeed for this reason that this L4 apprenticeship is of interest as it increases capacity in planning teams to be able to think strategically.

At the end of the workshop attendees were encouraged to contact NTU or BDC if they were interested in attending an in-person workshop in Mansfield to offer feedback to more detailed course development plans.

Part 2 – In person workshop

Following on from the webinar, an in-person stakeholder workshop was held on the 10th April in Mansfield at our University Hub to present a more detailed course plan and to get clear stakeholder input into key features of the apprenticeship, for example, delivery patterns, location and module content. The location was important as we wanted to underscore this was a regional offer, not a local 'Nottingham based' one. This was event was part of NTU's formal course approval process and colleagues from NTU's Centre for Academic Quality (CADQ) were there to observe and document the process. Alongside colleagues from NTU and BDC 9 externals attended from a range of local authorities and private sector companies such as Asbury Planning, Derby City Council, South Derbyshire District, Northeast Derbyshire District Council, Rushcliffe Borough Council and Charnwood District Council. The agenda was as follows:

12.30p.m	Arrival and lunch (12.30-1p.m)	
1p.m	Welcome and introductions	NTU Bolsover District Council
1.05pm	Introducing the project and reflections from the Webinar	Richard Bull
1.20p.m	Presentation from Course Team covering, but not limited to: • The rationale and USP of the course • Proposed course structure • Student personas & target audience • Course delivery • Course content, coherence, scaffolding • Student experience	NTU
2.20	Open Discussion to cover . . . • Course Aims and USP - Does the course align with stakeholder expectations? • Curriculum Design, coherence, Intent • Benchmark mapping to Apprenticeship standard • Learner experience (delivery patterns, personal tutoring etc.) • Course start date & funding constraints	All
2.50p.m	Recruitment and progression of learners - Expectations of LA's - Commitment from others - Recruitment opportunities and challenges	Bolsover District Council
3.30	Close and agreement of Post-Meeting Actions and Completion Deadlines	

Below is a summary of the outcomes of that consultation from the report that CADQ made.

An initial stakeholder consultation meeting was held in-person on 10 April 2025 with attendees from local councils and planning consultant firms. Attendees received a presentation which outlined the strategic intention and key features of the proposed apprenticeship training programme. Following the initial presentation, stakeholders were invited to share their thoughts on a number of key areas including proposed course content, apprenticeship delivery plan and apprentice experience. Stakeholders agreed that the proposal would support apprentices to develop the following core competencies:

- *Site study analysis*
- *Technical skills*
- *Analysing and assessing development proposals*
- *Monitoring and enforcement*
- *Understanding legislation and planning policy*
- *Caseload and project management*
- *Engaging and collaborating with stakeholders*

The development team provided a variety of delivery models for consultation. Stakeholders were overwhelmingly supportive of an in-person day-release model but welcomed further conversation on hybrid delivery options to improve the reach of the course.

Stakeholders were extremely supportive of the proposal and the potential career opportunities for both existing and new employees. Stakeholders particularly liked the inclusion of an academic award but thought that the content could be enhanced to ensure that aspects of both public and private sector organisations are included within the course content, highlighting that town planning is an interactive profession whereby apprentices would be able to learn from each other. Stakeholders also provided feedback as to the scheduling of modules and suggested that year one is themed around 'how' with year two focusing on the 'why'. The development team noted this as a positive enhancement.

In summary, the stakeholder consultation highlighted several key strengths of the proposed apprenticeship, and stakeholders were satisfied that this is a much-needed development for the sector.

This summary from CADQ encapsulates the very positive tone of the meeting and the strong sense in the room and within the course team that this was a proposal worth pursuing. The proposed course design is discussed next before outlining the next steps in the summary at the end.

4. Course design

Introduction to course design

Accountable to the Office for Students, NTU takes a rigorous approach to course design and follows a structured and collaborative approach to course design, ensuring high-quality standards and positive outcomes for students. Our Centre for Academic Development and Quality (CADQ) oversees the course design process, providing structures and guidance for course development and approval. They provide a designated Senior Quality and Standards Advisor (SQSA) supports course teams, ensuring the process remains collaborative and enhancement led. NTU's Quality Handbook governs learning and teaching regulations at NTU, providing a framework for course design and delivery. It includes policies, procedures, templates, and forms related to course changes, specifications, curriculum mapping, and external examiner reports. Once a course has followed a full approval process – from the business case, course design and stakeholder engagement it forward to a final formal approval by the Academic Course Approval Sub-Committee, a central NTU committee that provides governance and oversight, ensuring all newly designed courses and significant changes to existing courses are academically sound and viable. NTU's approach ensures that courses are developed to the highest standards, benefiting all students across the university.

The proposed course: Level 4 Certificate in Urban Planning and Sustainable Development

It is important to note at the offset that the current apprenticeship standard is just that, an apprenticeship standard as opposed to a qualification. During the stakeholder development workshops it was decided to include a Level 4 qualification in the apprenticeship delivery for the following reasons:

1. Regulatory or Legal Requirement: Recommended for Professional Practice: If a qualification is required by a regulator or legal body to practice a profession This ensures that apprentices meet all legal standards necessary for their occupation
2. Professional Body Requirement: Professional Registration: Some professions require specific qualifications for registration with a professional body. Including these qualifications in the apprenticeship ensures that apprentices can achieve the necessary professional status upon completion
3. Labour Market Requirement: Employer Demand: employers in the labour market widely require a specific qualification, including it in the apprenticeship ensures that apprentices are competitive and meet industry standards. This is crucial for their employability and career progression
4. Enhancing Skills and Knowledge: Comprehensive Training: Including qualifications can provide a structured and comprehensive training program, ensuring that apprentices gain both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. This dual approach enhances their overall competency and readiness for the job market
5. Meeting Industry Standards: Quality Assurance: Qualifications often come with established curricula and assessment standards, ensuring that the training provided is of high quality and meets industry benchmarks
6. Career Progression: Pathway to Higher Education: Qualifications can provide a clear pathway for further education and career advancement, allowing apprentices to pursue higher-level qualifications and roles within their industry. These justifications ensure that apprenticeships remain relevant, valuable, and aligned with both regulatory requirements and industry needs.

To that end, NTU is proposing a L4 Certificate in Urban Planning and Sustainable Development that meets the requirements of the occupational standard for the L4 Assistant in Town Planning as outlined by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) [6]. For full details of the proposed course mapped to the apprenticeship standard and KSBs (knowledge, skills and behaviours) please see Appendix 1.

This occupation is found in the planning, construction, architectural, infrastructure, environmental and local government sectors. Town Planning Assistants may work in local authorities, small consultancies, large multi-disciplinary consultancies, central government or other organisations undertaking planning work. The broad purpose of the occupation is to work with and provide technical and administrative support to Chartered Town Planners to deliver new developments and to shape and create sustainable places for the benefit of the public. They also help members of the public and/or clients to navigate the planning system and explain its rules and requirements. The work includes both office-based work and site visits. Town Planning Assistants need to be willing and able to travel for site visits. Town Planning Assistants research and compile site history and undertake initial site analysis for developments including producing documentation and graphical representations as well as checking compliance with legislation and environmental designations.

Course features

The course delivery will be day release

The course design will include an emphasis on planning for net zero and progression paths following the apprenticeship to allow further training in specialised subjects related to addressing climate change and net zero. This will address the skills gap around the decarbonisation of commercial development, with limited capacity, resource and knowledge within local planning authorities to properly plan for the supply of clean energy to buildings, energy efficiency of buildings both in respects of heating and cooling large spaces, designing in carbon neutral for the lifetime of the development both on site and through the supply chain, and in the construction and operational stages of the development, local nature recovery and bio-diversity net gain, dealing with flood risk, and surface water and sustainable drainage.

Alignment with EMIZ: The EMIZ has a focus on the development of the Advanced Manufacturing and Green Industries sectors across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Three sites have been designated as IZ sites including Infinity Park Derby, Hartington Staveley and the Explore Advanced Manufacturing and Research Park near Worksop. Bespoke course content will support and accelerate the delivery of these sites within the EMIZ to enable both increased planning capacity, and greater understanding of various environmental constraints that need to be planned for at an early stage of the development.

Specific engagement will be made with real life case studies and with the region that align with EMCCAs priorities. For example, we already have strategic partnerships with Arc Partnership and Morgan Sindall who are delivering the new Notts County Council offices at Top Wighay. We also well connected with partners looking at the Toton development via our presence on the Clifton Towns Board and have new links with Laing O'Rourke and the West Burton site for STEP. These case studies will enable the course to include continued professional development for planners in the local planning authorities and teaching for the cohort of apprentices to produce exemplars of good practice and practical solutions and appropriate mentoring and support from the University.

Assessment

The Level 4 Certificate in Urban Planning and Sustainable Development assessments would be coordinated and manged by NTU. The L4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship end-point assessment would be carried out by

[6] https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/town-planning-assistant/

an external assessment organisation, Training Qualifications UK, who are the only end-point assessment organisation for Town planning assistant (level 4)[7].Full details of the end-point assessment requirements can also be found on the IfATE website.[8]

Routes to Professional Recognition and Membership

Students would be encouraged to join the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) as student members whilst studying. Upon successful completion of the course and apprenticeship students would be eligible to join the RTPI as Affiliate members, with further development options open depending on intended career progression. The development of CPD opportunities, linked with the RTPI, would be embedded throughout both the course and apprenticeship. There is a general emphasis on working with, supporting, and understanding the role of Chartered (MRTPI) professionals throughout.

5. Conclusions and next steps

This short pilot study set out to answer two simple questions. 1) Is there a market for a L4 apprenticeship in Town Planning and if so; 2) Are NTU interested in developing and delivering it. This report has outlined the thorough approach the project team, a partnership between NTU and Bolsover District Council. Our conclusions are as follows

1. Our initial market analysis has shown the potential for a reasonable market, especially given that half of the current learners on the Chichester apprenticeship are East Midlands based.
2. Stakeholder engagement has been very positive and there is widespread support for this course.

Therefore, the project team are recommending that **NTU proceed towards a full validation of the course** that we have proposed (see Appendix 1). However, the original application noted a possible start date of September 2025. The stakeholders and course team agree that this deadline is too tight, and we propose finalising the course design aspects over the next three months and then the course would finally be approved in October/November 2025 ready for a start date of September 2026. This is in line with NTU's course approval guidelines and allows for a full marketing and recruitment cycle to maximise recruitment for September 2026.

[7] https://www.tquk.org
[8] https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/media/5093/st0936_town-planning-assistant_l4_ap-for-publication_04052021.pdf

Appendix 1: Proposed course structure

Level 4 Certificate in Urban Planning and Sustainable Development (Module Overview)	Assessment	L4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship (ifATE Role Duties)	L4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship (ifATE KSBs – 'Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours)
Year 1 (September to August)			
Module: Site Analysis and Sustainable Development (20 credits) Students will be able to conduct initial site analysis, relating this to planning processes and development proposals. Also, considering the meaning and role of sustainability in proposed site development. The module will enable students to analyse sites, considering both opportunities and constraints. Including associated site history, environmental restrictions, policy, guidance and legislation. This will involve the use of digital tools and mapping which enable site research. Students will also understand and carry out site visits. This includes the importance of site photographs, evidence gathering and relating	**100% Coursework** Site assessment project and critical reflection.	**Core Duties 1,2,4** 1. Research and compile site history including any land use policy restrictions and constraints. 2. Undertake initial site analysis through site visits, taking site photographs, analysis of maps. 4. Summarise policy constraints, site research and baseline analysis with regards to planning applications or proposal for developments and present the information clearly and concisely in written and verbal format to Chartered Town Planners. 5. Review environmental and other specialist designations and reports to	K1 K3 K4 K5 S1 S2 S4 S7 S9 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K8 K9 S2 S3 S8 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K11 S1 S2 S4 S6 S9 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K4 K5 S2

development proposals to built and landscape contexts. Also, understanding and implementing relevant health and safety procedures. The core concepts of sustainability and sustainable development will be critically explored in relation to site analysis, development proposals and effective planning decisions. Students will also understand the role of planning in addressing sustainability and achieving carbon neutrality.		provide a preliminary assessment of the environmental and physical impact of planning applications and/or development proposals.	B1 B2 B3 B4 B5
Module: Technical and Professional Skills (20 credits) Students will understand and apply project, time and case management skills in relation to planning processes. This includes assessing relevant timeframes and deadlines alongside understanding the importance of records and evidence gathering. The context for this is supporting effective, robust planning recommendations and decisions at an appropriate level. The module will allow students to interpret digital and physical maps and drawings, including those for development proposals. This is to enable scaling and interpretation alongside an assessment of scale, mass and form in built and landscape contexts.	**100% Coursework** Portfolio project and critical reflection.	**Core Duties 3,11,13** 3. Measure proposals for development, as represented on a site plan or in elevation, to understand the size and scale of the proposed buildings and structures. 11. Attend and speak at planning meetings, in an office environment and on site, and keep an accurate record of meetings. 13. Describe and code plans, planning documents, and supporting material accurately within a relevant workplace document filing system or casework management system.	K8 K10 S2 S8 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K1 K2 K4 K7 K9 S3 S5 S9 S10 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K2 K6 S6 S7 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5

Internal and external stakeholders in planning will be introduced. Enabling students to understand the varied expectations of planning processes and how this relates to decision making. This includes internal and external meetings, both in an office and site environment. Students will appreciate the role of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) within the profession. Also, understanding ethical practice, the RTPI Code of Conduct and the importance of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in reflective practice.			
Module: Planning Policy and Legislation (20 credits) Students will understand, interpret and analyse the spatial planning and legislative contexts that underpin planning processes. This is to support effective, robust planning recommendations and decisions at an appropriate level. The module will enable students to assess national, regional and local planning policy and guidance. Allowing an understanding of its role and application in planning processes. Also, understanding and engaging with the procedures of policy consultation, adoption and implementation. This includes the role of policy in the allocation, assessment and	**100% Coursework** Policy assessment project and critical reflection.	**Core Duties: 7, 9** 6. Monitor and check proposals for development, planning applications and/or completed proposals for compliance against relevant local, strategic and national planning requirements including statutory obligations and conditions. Commence Enforcement investigations under the supervision of a Chartered Town Planner. 7. Apply relevant legislation and national and locally adopted policy when working on planning projects and casework. 9. Manage a caseload of straight-forward planning applications and	 K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K6 K7 K10 S1 S2 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K1 K2 K4 K6 K11 S1 S2 S4 S6 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5

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Nottingham Trent University

delivery of development proposals. Furthermore, the principles of sustainable development and how this is addressed through policy. Students will be able to interpret and assess the role of legislation in planning processes. This is to understand the underpinning principles of development. Also, the regulatory context of planning processes and how this relates to decision making at an appropriate level. The module will also introduce the management of heritage and environmental assets. This is alongside urban design principles. Students will understand the interaction of planning with wider environmental legislation and strategy, including links to sustainability and carbon neutrality.		representations to development plans under supervision.	K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K7 K10 K11 K12 S1 S2 S4 S6 S7 S9 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5
Module: Planning Application Processes (20 credits) Students will understand and be able to manage case work to support planning application processes. Also, able to relate this to planning enforcement and appeals. This is to support effective, robust planning	**100% Coursework** Planning officer report project and portfolio.	**Core Duties: 5, 6, 7, 9, 16** 5. Review environmental and other specialist designations and reports to provide a preliminary assessment of the environmental and physical impact of planning applications and/or development proposals.	K4 K5 S2 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5

recommendations and decisions at an appropriate level. The module will take a holistic approach to planning application processes enabling students to engage with pre-application, decision making, reporting and post-application matters. This includes conditions, condition discharge and appeals. Students will also understand the role of planning obligations and enforcement procedures. Students will be able to analyse relevant planning policy, guidance, legislation, stakeholder views and wider material considerations in forming reports and professional recommendations. This includes addressing planning balance and applying relevant weight in the decision-making process. Students will understand and be able to engage with the reporting process for planning applications, enforcement and appeals at an appropriate level. This includes case and time management in the context of relevant deadlines.		6. Monitor and check proposals for development, planning applications and/or completed proposals for compliance against relevant local, strategic and national planning requirements including statutory obligations and conditions. Commence Enforcement investigations under the supervision of a Chartered Town Planner. 7. Apply relevant legislation and national and locally adopted policy when working on planning projects and casework. 9. Manage a caseload of straight-forward planning applications and representations to development plans under supervision. 16. Assist Chartered Town Planners with planning appeals, collating casework materials and supporting documentation and responding to written evidence and other planning information presented by the opposing side.	K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K6 K7 K10 S1 S2 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K1 K2 K4 K6 K11 S1 S2 S4 S6 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 K7 K10 K11 K12 S1 S2 S4 S6 S7 S9 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K1 K2 K6 K10 S1 S2 S4 S6 S7 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5
Year 2 (September to April)			
Module: Planning, People, Society and Space (20 credits)	**100% Coursework**	**Core Duties: 8, 10**	K1 K2 K3 K4 K6 K7

Students will understand the role of internal and external stakeholders in planning processes. Also, able to communicate with stakeholders at relevant times, understanding the position of planning professionals as negotiators and mediators. This is to support effective, robust planning recommendations and decisions at an appropriate level. The module will enable students to understand the often-varied expectations of planning processes from stakeholders. Including exploring and examining community and political engagement with planning. Also, the role of public consultation, schemes of delegation and committees. Students will understand the contested nature of development proposals alongside the important role of communication and negotiation with stakeholders. The module will also enable students to explore the varied approaches to achieving sustainable development and carbon neutrality through planning processes. Including the wider role and contribution of stakeholders.	Essay and critical reflection.	8. Provide clear and relevant advice to members of the public, councillors, agents and/or clients on planning issues, face to face, by phone and by email and other communications. 10. Assist Chartered Town Planners with consultation and/or community engagement on planning applications and/or strategic or local plans including taking part in technical discussions on proposals for development with members of the public and/or councillors and justifying the stance you take.	S1 S5 S10 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K7 K9 S5 S10 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5
Module: Sustainable Development Project (20 credits) Students will draw together their understanding and skills to support project	**100% Coursework**	**Core Duties: 12, 14, 15** 12. Support Chartered Town Planners to deliver projects including following a	 K12 S1 S2 S6 S9 S11 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5

and report preparation. This is with a particular focus on analysing sustainability and carbon neutrality from a planning perspective. The module will support individual and team work to analyse a range of case study sites in the East Midlands. This is with a focus on understanding how these case studies contribute to sustainable development and carbon neutrality. Also, critically engaging with the associated planning processes and wider spatial planning context. This is to understand the role of planning in helping achieve holistic, sustainable outcomes. Students will be able the understand and appreciate major development proposals at an appropriate level. Furthermore, students will be enabled to undertake research as individuals and teams. This is to support the preparation of reports (including graphics and mapping), recommendations and presentations. This module is also intended to support students prepare for the apprenticeship end-point assessment, including the project to be prepared and submitted. Formative assessment opportunities for knowledge test and professional discussion will be included.	Individual and/or group presentations and portfolio.	project plan and ensuring key timescales are met. 14. Work as part of a multidisciplinary team, knowing who to consult and seeking advice from other disciplines where relevant 15. Prepare documentation including graphical representations, maps and site plans and present to clients and/or local authority committee under supervision.	K2 K3 K4 K5 K7 K9 K10 K11 K12 S1 S2 S5 S6 S9 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 K8 S4 S5 S8 S10 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5

Year 2 (April to September)			
Support: Apprenticeship End-Point Assessment (note this only applies to the L4 Town Planning Assistant Apprenticeship)	**Knowledge Test** 60 minute test based on 20 multiple-choice questions (both knowledge and scenario based) **Professional Discussion** 60 minute two-way discussion based on a range of questions and supported by student portfolio of evidence **Project** 4,000 word project report focusing on specific planning matter (e.g. site assessment, policy area or planning issue) with a business/organisation benefit.	**All role duties.**	**All KSBs**.

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Local Growth Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 28 October 2025

UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Monitoring Update

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Growth

Classification	This report is Public
Report By	Natalie Etches Head of Business Growth

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

- To provide members with an update on the projects being delivered by the Economic Development Team with funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for the financial year 2025/26.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

1.1 The UK Government launched the UK Shared Prosperity Fund on 13 April 2022 and provided £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment through to March 2025 of which Bolsover District Council received £1,963,993.

1.2 An additional allocation of £803,023 for the 12-month period April 2025 – March 2026 was received. £667,824 of funding has been allocated to seven projects which are being managed by the Economic Development Team. The breakdown of the total funding is £451,999 revenue and £351,824 capital.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

2.1 Below is a breakdown of the allocation of funding for each of the seven projects followed by an update of activity and expenditure that has taken place **up to 30 September 2023 (Quarter 2).**

Revenue Projects	Amount
Business in Bolsover	£34,000
Hyper Local Business Support	£50,000
Creative Women's Network	£12,000
Housebuilders Forum	£20,000
Net Zero Innovation Programme	£200,000
TOTAL	**£316,000**

Capital Projects	Amount
Creative Hub Project	£50,000
Net Zero Growth Grants	£301,824
TOTAL	**£351,824**

2.2 **Business In Bolsover**

Roxy Rhodes (Filter Free Business) has been commissioned to deliver business support events to businesses across the district, which includes scheduling and management of events together with on-line and social media promotional support. £34,000 UKSPF funding has been allocated specifically to contribute towards Female Business Owners Monthly Training & Networking (£12,000) and Monthly Business Networking Events (£22,000).

Attendance in Q2 for the Monthly Business Networking Events was 48 and the Female Business Owners Monthly Training & Networking was 53 (101 attendees in total). Attendance was lower than in Q1 but Q2 figures only relate to two months meetings as neither of the events were held in August due to it being the main holiday period.
Feedback from events:

- 5/5 for ease of booking
- 4.9/5 for event content
- 4.8/5 for host/presenters
- 4.9/5 for venues

Attendees were asked what they found most useful about the event and comments included:

- It was a great opportunity to get “fresh eyes” on my posts/emails etc that I send out from my business
- The training is always great and very informative. Rody was fabulous as always and delivers it so well
- Great to make some new connections – I already have a meeting in my diary with another attendee for some potential work
- Talke were very interesting a usual, especially the one our incivility in the workplace

Attendees were asked what they found most enjoyable about the event and comments included:

- How relaxed it was. Hearing other women’s business inspiration
- Informal and related so I felt comfortable to ask questions
- The atmosphere was fantastic

Progress against outputs is well ahead of target:

- Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support – 211 in total from Q1 and Q2 (target of 40 for the whole term of the programme)

- Number of local events or activities supported – 10 in total from Q1 and Q2 (target of 10 for the whole term of the programme)

There was £9,000 spend in Q2. It is envisaged that the remainder of the £34,000 (£18,000) will be split over the remaining 2 quarters (£9,000 per quarter).

Social Media followers:

By promoting Business in Bolsover events on social media and on www.businessinbolsover.co.uk, followers on social media and email have increased by +371%

Social Media engagement continues to grow, with +55 new companies and individuals following us in the previous quarter.

The plan is to continue to deliver business events across the district, including scheduling and management of events with on-line and social media promotional support for the Female Business Owners Monthly Training & Networking and Monthly Business Networking Events.

2.3 **Hyper Local Business Support**
Clowne Enterprise have been commissioned to deliver hyper local business support to Bolsover clients and businesses with a UKSPF allocation of £50,000. Following the focus last quarter on raising awareness of the services that are available through Clowne Enterprise and ensuring that partners and intermediaries are aware of the continuing support available through this element of the UKSPF funding in Bolsover, the number of people engaging with the programme has continued to grow.

Clowne Enterprise have continued to provide flexible and accessible 1:1 support to clients with an emphasis on ensuring that it is totally focused on their specific needs. The group of new clients that were supported this quarter contained more existing businesses than pre-starts.

Clowne Enterprise have continued to interface with other local service providers to ensure that, between them, they are providing a full range of support to clients. This quarter Clowne Enterprise attended the Net Zero programme networking event and delivered a presentation about the business support available from the Business in Bolsover programme. The Net Zero grant opportunities are being promoted regularly via the newsletter, and the new marketing and outreach officer for that programme has attended Clowne Enterprises own networking events. They are referring a sizeable number of people to the Derbyshire Business Start-up Programme and the grant opportunities that are available through that service. Attendance at the Bolsover Partnership AGM, the Bolsover One Year On event and the Bolsover Partnership Employment and Skills Group. Clowne Enterprise also had a promotional stall at Clowne Gala organised by Clowne Parish Council with enterprise competitions and prizes, from which they attracted at least one new client.

Participation in the programme of learning workshops has been good. They have continued to deliver some of the popular topics, especially those related to promotional and marketing topics. New workshops run this quarter have included:

- Digital Foundations for Growth
- Automation Made Simple
- Growing your Business through Recruitment

as well as the Social Media Surgery which continues to be popular. The Growth Through Recruitment workshop was delivered by one of Clowne Enterprise's clients who has been through a period of successful high growth with the support of Clowne Enterprise. All workshops have been well attended.

As shown in the graphs later in this report the programme continues to stay on track, or ahead of outputs and outcomes.

Clowne Enterprise are making excellent progress in terms of engaging with clients and in helping them to achieve positive outcomes. Specific examples of good practice are:

- Supported a client to deliver a pilot programme of play activities for children during the summer holidays. The support included coaching, information about relevant legislation, signposting and collecting/collating customer questionnaires from parents to ascertain the impact of the pilot. This pilot will help the client to develop the idea for the future.

- One of their clients who is an established swimming coach for adults and who has been planning to extend her services into yoga classes, coaching for women's groups and development experiences. This has required support from Clowne Enterprise in helping the client to maintain focus and also in how to market her various services to different groups of clients. During the summer months she has delivered an extremely successful series of events at Creswell Crags: Sunrise Sanctuary and Sunset Sanctuary. They are now helping her to develop ideas for an alternative format of Christmas party for businesses incorporating relaxation and various treatments.

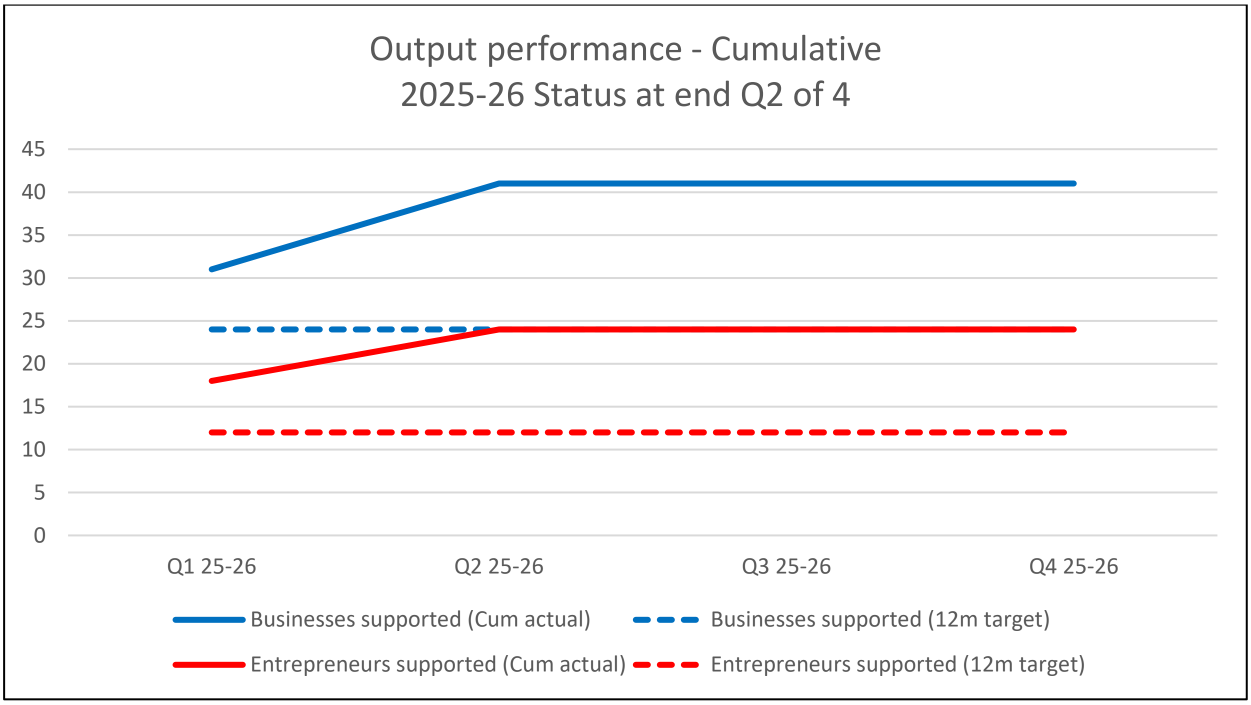
- Assisted a local not-for-profit organisation in developing a business plan to address the loss of one of its core funding streams. The financial planning for that project was delivered as part of the Business in Bolsover programme. Detailed research and the implementation of the forward plan were delivered as part of an additional, unfunded programme of work.

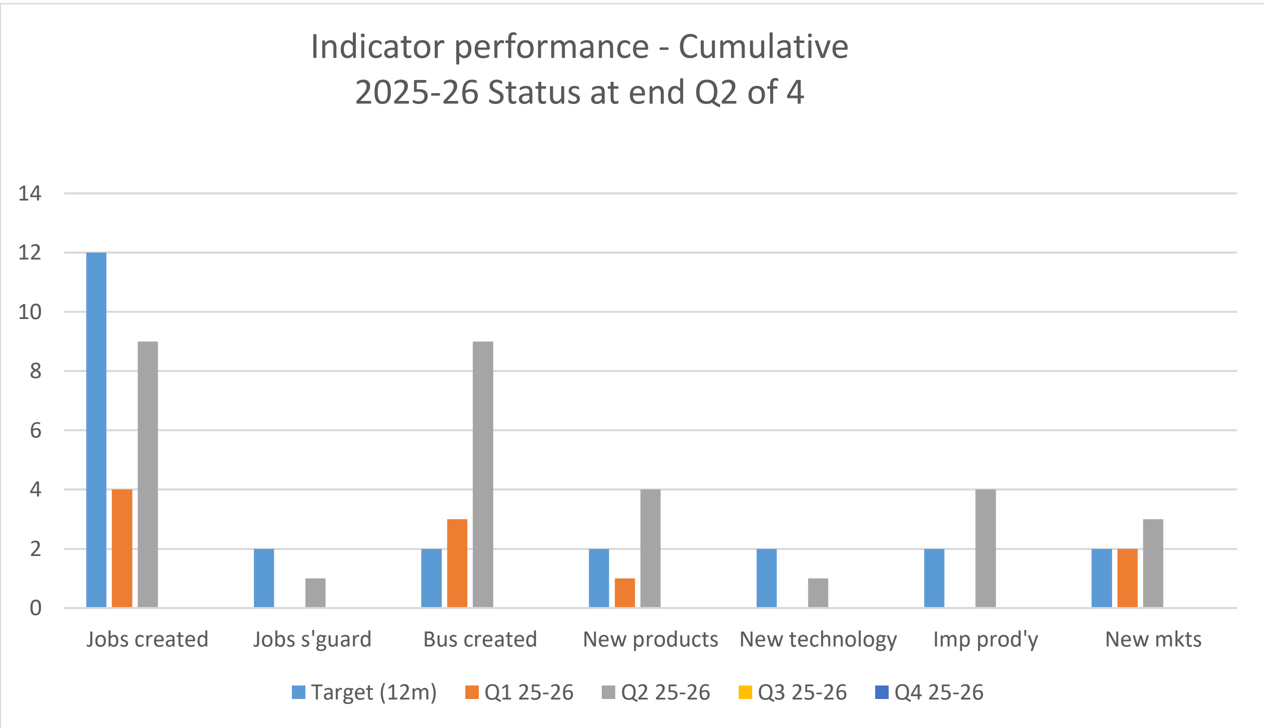
Clowne Enterprise are well on target regarding the group of KPIs. In terms of the recruitment of potential new business starts and existing businesses they are ahead of target: 200% and 171% of the full year targets respectively.

Progress is being made against the seven indicators for the programme. Six new businesses have been created this quarter and five new jobs created.

Expenditure in Q2 2025-26 has been £16,664 (£4,166 relates to Q1 but the payment did not clear in Q1). Scheduled expenditure in the remaining two quarters of the programme will bring the total expenditure up to the programme budget of £50,000

The following graphs show our cumulative performance against the output and indicator targets. All are either on-track to reach or exceed the target for the 12-month programme by the end of March 2026.





The programme of workshops over the coming months will include some new themes:

- Building your Brand,
- Cyber Security, and
- Winning Customers for Life

as well as revisiting previous topics such as email marketing; social media strategies and tax/self-assessment.

Clowne Enterprise are continuing to hold monthly informal business network events which provide the opportunity for existing clients to meet and share ideas, and also for potential new clients to make contact with the local network of businesses and to learn more about the support currently available to them.

2.4 **Creative Women's Network**
Platform Thirty1 have been commissioned to deliver support to creative businesses from the arts, culture and visitor economy sectors. The monthly network meets the first Wednesday of every month at Pleasley Vale Mills. £12,000 of UKSPF funding has been allocated to cover the cost of running the sessions. In Q2 34 attendees came to the networking sessions.

There were no payments made in Q1 for the cost of running the sessions as the invoice for the Quarter was not submitted in time to be paid before 30 June 2025. Q1 and Q2 payments (£6,000) have been paid in Q2.

The programme is well on target.

The number of organisations receiving non-financial support the Q2 was 34 (including Q1 numbers this equates to 173% of the total target for the year)

The number of local events or activities supported in Q2 was 3 (including Q1 numbers this equates to 60% of the total target for the year)

The number of organisations receiving non-financial support will continue to rise each quarter due to the increasing popularity of these networking events.

Sessions are planned frequently and therefore the target of 10 sessions over the year will be met.

There was no spend on this programme for Q1 as Platform Thirty1 did not submit their quarterly invoice for payment before 30 June 2025. Therefore, Q1 payment has been made in Q2 together with Q2 payment. Platform Thirty1 have been informed to ensure that future invoices are submitted in time to be paid before the end of each Quarter.

The plan is to continue to deliver the Creative Women's Network events over the forthcoming six months.

2.5 **Housebuilders Forum**
The Bolsover-UK Place Belong campaign was launched at the one-year place anniversary in June 2025. The Belong video showcases the ambition of Bolsover

to promote the area as a great value living location. Following the anniversary event the inaugural East Midlands Housing Developer Forum took place. A summary of the meeting is below:

3 September 2025 – 3-5pm. Creswell Crags
Attendees:

Woodall Homes
Bolsover District Council
Forge New Homes
Persimmon Homes
Strata
Homes England
Dragonfly UK
Stancliffe Homes
MJ Gleeson
Wilkins Hammond

SWOT Analysis of local Housing Sector:

Strengths:

- **Quality of housing**: Emphasis on residential choice and balancing family and commercial provisions.
- **Collaborative forum**: The Bolsover Place Board programme is highlighted as a collaborative forum.
- **Strong heritage**: The importance of preserving heritage while modernising and attracting people to the town.
- **Access and connectivity**: Good connectivity is noted as a strength.
- **Proactive and stable planning department**: A successful and growing planning department or council.
- **Future growth areas**: Key areas of future growth have been identified, such as Shirebrook and Creswell.
- **Experienced group**: The group has great experience and knowledge.
- **Good housing market**: The existing housing market is strong.
- **Community spirit**: The population and Bolsover town are adapting and changing, with a great heart of people in place.

Opportunities:

- Opportunities through EMCCA with a focus on housing growth
- Place making with strong sense of community and belonging
- Share data to support sustainable growth
- Synergies win/win for developer and place
- Use lifestyle traits - unique heritage - education traits - build on story
- Identify media platforms to deliver messages
- Collaborative working
- Land availability with large landowners – invite to future forum meetings

- Support place young ambassador programme - apprenticeships - supporting young people into careers/development within sector
- Support for diversity artists/young people/your reps?
- Attend housing specific events
- Sharing marketing media such as new narrative, photo library & Belong video.
- Promote key attractors for house buyers to key segments: employment opportunities, access services access open space
- Showcase place uniqueness
- Share cumulative economic impact of new developments
- Identify what does best practice look like?
- Share key council contacts for developers to benefit from
- CSR and social value

With the opportunities focussed on marketing and promotion of the area as a great living location it was agreed that a facilitator to lead the future sessions would be commissioned to have housing developer and marketing background.

Total spend to the end of Q2 equates to £82.17 relating to room hire and refreshments.

Outputs:

Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support: Target total 8 – Q2 actual 8.

Number of local events/activities: Target total 4 – Q2 actual 1

Outcomes:

Number of enterprises adopting new or improved products or services: Target total 4 – Q2 actual - 0

Anticipated spend Q3 - £5,000 with remaining to be spent as planned in Q4.

The SWOT analysis from the first meeting provides the context for the forum going forward. Data was discussed to inform an understanding of the housing market but marketing activity will be the focus so future trends may be presented.

Planned action is to commission a facilitator with housing developer and marketing experience to lead the forum to ensure marketing is produced to support developers showcase Bolsover.

Future meetings to take place in November 2025, January 2026 and March 2026.

2.6 **Net Zero Innovation Programme**

- Total project allocation: £200,000
- Total project spend to date: £100,000
- The second quarter of the project has seen an increase in activity now that the project team are fully in place at NTU

- Progress towards outputs/outcomes is steady and tracks last year's figures, where activity was slow over Q1 and Q2, with numbers increasing over the last 2 quarters.
- Marketing has been carried out – adverts have been placed on LinkedIn to advertise the project. Focus is on the workshop offer. There has also been a targeted leaflet drop to businesses in the area.
- A case study is in progress from the latest event, which was held at a local business premises, Alleppey Kitchen in Bolsover.
- An article has been published in Issue 70 of InTouch, promoting the grant scheme and support available from the NZIP, which will be distributed in October.
- The project has been nominated for the EDIE Net-Zero Awards. The project team are travelling to London on the 17th October for the awards ceremony, where the project is a finalist in the Upskilling and Training Initiative of the Year category. edie Net-Zero Awards – Meet the Finalists

- Below are dates of workshops and events for future activity. We are planning to run events across the region and at different venues and online. We are currently in discussion with local business champions to run events at local business premises.

  Workshops:
  14th Oct
  19th Nov
  20th Jan
  25th Feb
  11th March

  Events
  25th Nov
  27th Feb

- We will also be running upskilling workshops for businesses who attended workshops in year 1. This will represent their next step on their journey to Net Zero and will focus on implementation, rather than awareness.

Updated figures:

- 43 businesses have been in contact about the project since the start of phase 2
- 9 businesses have had an Energy Efficiency Site Audit completed
- 8 businesses are pending a site visit with Mike for an Energy Efficiency Site Audit
- 5 unique businesses attended a networking event in Q2 / 8 attendees in total (some businesses brought a colleague to the event)
- 1 unique business attended a Carbon Reduction workshop in Q2
- 4 businesses have successfully applied for and been awarded a Net Zero Growth Grant following support from the project, with further applications pending

2.7 **Creative Hub**

Local Creative Ltd in Q2 have delivered the 3rd workshop (3 August). The workshop considered practical steps for a first Phase of developing a more ambitious site vision. We discussed the ways in which a temporary facility in the existing Co-op building could be used for exploring potential uses, governance models, and funding, and identified immediate activities to animate the building.

Bolsover District Commissioning Board has approved that the focus of the remainder of the work led by Local Creative Ltd and their subcontractors: Baumont Lyons Architects and Tyler Turner, Creative Practitioner is getting the former Coop building compliment and opened up for the hub to be a testbed for creative activity that will shape the future vision for a Creative Hub on the site. We are currently engaging with Arts Council England (ACE) to support with funding to animate the space and provide a programme of activity to support the future viability.

Spend this quarter equates to £40,000.

Tyler Turner, a creative poet from the area has been commissioned by Local Creative Ltd to share the engagement done to date. Local residents and stakeholders need to have a clear understanding what the scope of a creative hub could be for Bolsover. Tyler has written a poem that articulates this, see the video link here.

Outputs: Number of local events or activities supported – Total target 1
Q1, 3 Q2, 1= total 4

Outcomes: Improved engagement numbers – Total target 250
Q1, 35 Q2, 12= 47

The remaining £10,000 will be spent as the project completes at the end of Quarter 4.

The initial brief was to provide a pre planning business case for a creative hub on the former Co-op site This has now evolved as internal and externa influences have come into play. With Bolsover District Council now owning the Co-op building, a short term test bed phase is being planned alongside a more long-term vision. There has been a delay in starting engagement and animating the space as the former coop building has been prone to ASB requiring the site to be secured. The site is currently undergoing the installation of hoarding around the site. Costs are being agreed to open up the site to be compliant so that the site can be animated and programmes tested alongside local engagement. ASB will impact on the capital budget from the £15m Regeneration Funding allocated for the site.

2.8 **Net Zero Growth Grants**

- Total project allocation: £301,824
- The total value of the grants approved to date is: £73,849.10 with Match Funding of £71,287.12

- The total value of the potential allocation to date (if all EOIs in progress complete a Full Application and were approved) is: £214,415.60 with Match Funding of £179,873.40
- The second quarter of the project has seen an increase in activity, which is to be expected. The first quarter activity consisted of promotion, managing enquiries and appraising EOIs, whereas the second quarter has moved into delivery as we start to receive the completed applications from businesses.
- Enquiries continue to be logged by the team and both BDC and NTU continue to promote awareness of the programme at events and workshops.
- Progress towards outputs/outcomes is slow but not unexpected as the project moves from the business engagement and enquiries stage to delivery.
- The range of projects being proposed/delivered include PV solar panel installation, installation of LED lighting to reduce consumption, purchase of new equipment/technology to reduce waste to landfill
- An article has been published in Issue 70 of InTouch, promoting the grant scheme and support available from the NZIP, which will be distributed in October to encourage other businesses to come forward.

Updated figures:

- 25 businesses have been in contact to enquire about the grants scheme and have been sent an Expression of Interest
- 15 businesses have returned an EOI and have been referred to the NZIP for an Energy Efficiency site audit
- 12 businesses have been invited to complete a Full Application
- 5 Businesses have submitted a Full Application
- 4 Applications have been appraised by the panel and 4 have been approved
- 1 business has fully completed their project to date and is in the process of claiming their grant

3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 The Local Growth Scrutiny has been provided with this report which sets out details of the schemes funded by UK Shared Prosperity which have been identified to be delivered by the Economic Development Team. The intention of the report is to update Local Growth Scrutiny of progress on delivery to date, for Members to review the content of the update to ensure appropriate progress is being made to deliver the projects successfully within the timescale provided.

4. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 The alternative is not to provide detailed updates of the progress on delivery of the projects but this may risk loss of focus on achieving the outputs and outcomes required.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That Members review the content of the progress report and make recommendations to Executive, where required, on additional action that may be needed for successful delivery.

Approved by Councillor Tom Munro Portfolio Holder for Growth

IMPLICATIONS;

Finance and Risk: **Yes☐** **No ☒**

Details:

There are no additional finance implications arising from this report, all expenditure will be funded from the grant award

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): **Yes☐** **No ☐**

Details:

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment:

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details:

Three of the five projects have specific aims and objectives around access to carbon reduction solutions for businesses, which in turn will enhance the environment. Grants are available to enable businesses to become more carbon efficient, there are plans to assist businesses with the development of sustainable and Net Zero strategies and also advice to tourism businesses on how to become greener and more sustainable.

Staffing: **Yes☐** **No ☒**

Details:

There is no staffing implication, delivery is contained within existing structures

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.
Economy • Working with Partners to support enterprise, innovation, jobs and skills • Promoting the District and working with Partners to increase tourism Environment • Supporting businesses to reduce their carbon footprint

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	**Title**

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Meeting of Local Growth Scrutiny Committee on 28th October 2025

Local Growth Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025/26

Report of the Scrutiny Officer

Classification	This report is Public
Contact Officer	Scrutiny Officer

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

- To provide members of the Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the meeting programme of the Committee for 2025/26.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

1.1 The main purpose of the report is to inform members of the meeting programme for the year 2025/26 and planned agenda items (Appendix 1).

1.2 This programme may be subject to change should additional reports/presentations be required, or if items need to be re-arranged for alternative dates.

1.3 Review Scopes submitted will be agreed within Informal Session in advance of the designated meeting for Member approval to ensure that there is sufficient time to gather the information required by Members and to enable forward planning of questions.

1.4 Members may raise queries about the programme at the meeting or at any time with the Scrutiny Officer should they have any queries regarding future meetings.

1.5 All Scrutiny Committees are committed to equality and diversity in undertaking their statutory responsibilities and ensure equalities are considered as part of all Reviews. The selection criteria when submitting a topic, specifically asks members to identify where the topic suggested affects particular population groups or geographies.

1.6 The Council has a statutory duty under s.149 Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination.

1.7 As part of the scoping of Reviews, consideration is given to any consultation that could support the evidence gathering process.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

2.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is the meeting schedule for 2025/26 and the proposed agenda items for approval/amendment.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 This report sets the formal Committee Work Programme for 2025/26 and the issues identified for review.

3.2 The Scrutiny Programme enables challenge to service delivery both internally and externally across all the Council Ambitions.

3.3 The Scrutiny functions outlined in Part 3.6(1) of the Council's Constitution requires each Scrutiny Committee to set an annual work plan.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 There is no option to reject the report as the Scrutiny functions outlined in Part 3.6(1) of the Council's Constitution requires each Scrutiny Committee to set an annual work plan.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That Members review this report and the Programme attached at Appendix 1 for approval and amendment as required. All Members are advised to contact the Scrutiny Officer should they have any queries regarding future meetings.

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk **Yes☐** **No ☒** **Details:** None from this report. On behalf of the Section 151 Officer
Legal (including Data Protection) **Yes☒** **No ☐** **Details:** In carrying out scrutiny reviews the Council is exercising its scrutiny powers as laid out in Part 1A, s9F(2) of the Local Government Act 2000. On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council
Staffing **Yes☐** **No ☒** **Details:** None from this report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service
Equality and Diversity, and Consultation **Yes**☐ **No** ☒ **Details:** None from this report.
Environment **Yes**☐ **No** ☒ Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment. **Details:** None from this report.

DECISION INFORMATION:

☒ ***Please indicate which threshold applies:***	
Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an Executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more wards in the District or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:	**Yes**☐ **No** ☒
Revenue (a) Results in the Council making Revenue Savings of £75,000 or more or **(b)** Results in the Council incurring Revenue Expenditure of £75,000 or more.	**(a)** ☐ **(b)** ☐
Capital (a) Results in the Council making Capital Income of £150,000 or more or **(b)** Results in the Council incurring Capital Expenditure of £150,000 or more.	**(a)** ☐ **(b)** ☐
District Wards Significantly Affected: *(to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the District)* Please state below which wards are affected or tick **All** if all wards are affected:	**All** ☐

Is the decision subject to Call-In? (*Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In*) If No, is the call-in period to be waived in respect of the decision(s) proposed within this report? ***(decisions may only be classified as exempt from call-in with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer)*** **Consultation carried out:** *(this is any consultation carried out prior to the report being presented for approval)* **Leader ☐ Deputy Leader ☐ Executive ☐ SLT ☐** **Relevant Service Manager ☐ Members ☒ Public ☐** **Other ☐**	**Yes☐ No ☒** **Yes☐ No ☐** **Yes☒ No ☐**

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment, Housing
All

DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

Appendix No	**Title**
1.	Local Growth Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025/26

Background Papers
(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive, you must provide copies of the background papers).

Appendix 1

Local Growth Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme 2025/26

Formal Items – Report Key

Performance Review	Policy Development	Policy/Strategy/ Programme Monitoring	Review Work	Call-In/Review of Executive Decisions	Petition

Date of Meeting	Items for Agenda		Lead Officer
8 July 2025	**Part A – Formal**	• Business Growth Strategy (Draft)	Head of Business Growth, DDL
		• Pleasley Vale Regeneration Programme – Monitoring Update	Director of Property & Construction DDL; Head of Business Growth, DDL
		• Dragonfly Shareholder Board Update (Verbal)	Chief Executive
		• Agreement of Work Programme 2025/26	Scrutiny Officer
	Part B – Informal	• Review work	Scrutiny Officer
28 October 2025	**Part A – Formal**	• UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Economic Development Projects (Monitoring Update)	Head of Business Growth, DDL
		• East Midlands Investment Zone - Monitoring Update	Interim Director, Planning, Corporate Policy and Devolution
		• Dragonfly Shareholder Board Update	Chief Executive
		• Agreement of Work Programme 2025/26	Scrutiny Officer
	Part B – Informal	• Review work	Scrutiny Officer
24 February 2026	**Part A – Formal**	• Pleasley Vale Regeneration Programme – Monitoring Update	Head of Business Growth, DDL
		• Dragonfly Shareholder Board Update	Chief Executive
		• Business Growth Strategy (Monitoring Update)	Head of Business Growth, DDL

Date of Meeting	Items for Agenda		Lead Officer
		• Joint Review of Security Arrangements at The Arc: Policies, Protocols and Procedures (First Interim Report)	Scrutiny Officer
		• Agreement of Work Programme 2025/26	Scrutiny Officer
	Part B – Informal	• Review work	Scrutiny Officer
28 April 2026	**Part A – Formal**	• UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Economic Development Projects (Monitoring Update)	Head of Business Growth, DDL
		• **(Tourism and Place Strategy – presentation to Members)**	TBC
		• Dragonfly Shareholder Board Update	Chief Executive
		• Work Programme 2025/26	Scrutiny Officer
	Part B – Informal	• Review work	Scrutiny Officer