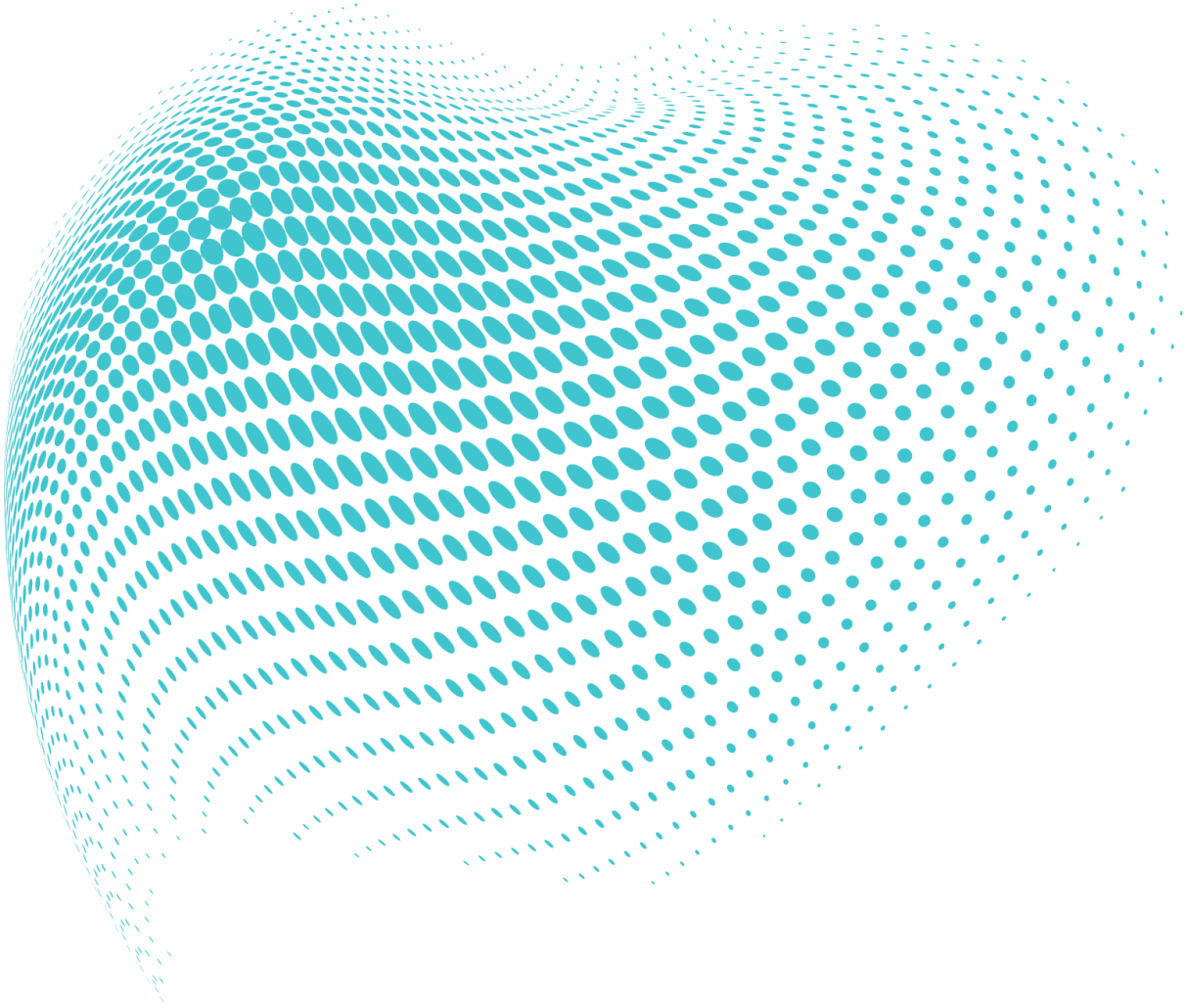




Local Skills Improvement Plan

Insights | Skills | Growth



This Local Skills Improvement Plan has been approved by the Secretary of State in line with the approval criteria set out in the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, and in accordance with the LSIP statutory guidance.

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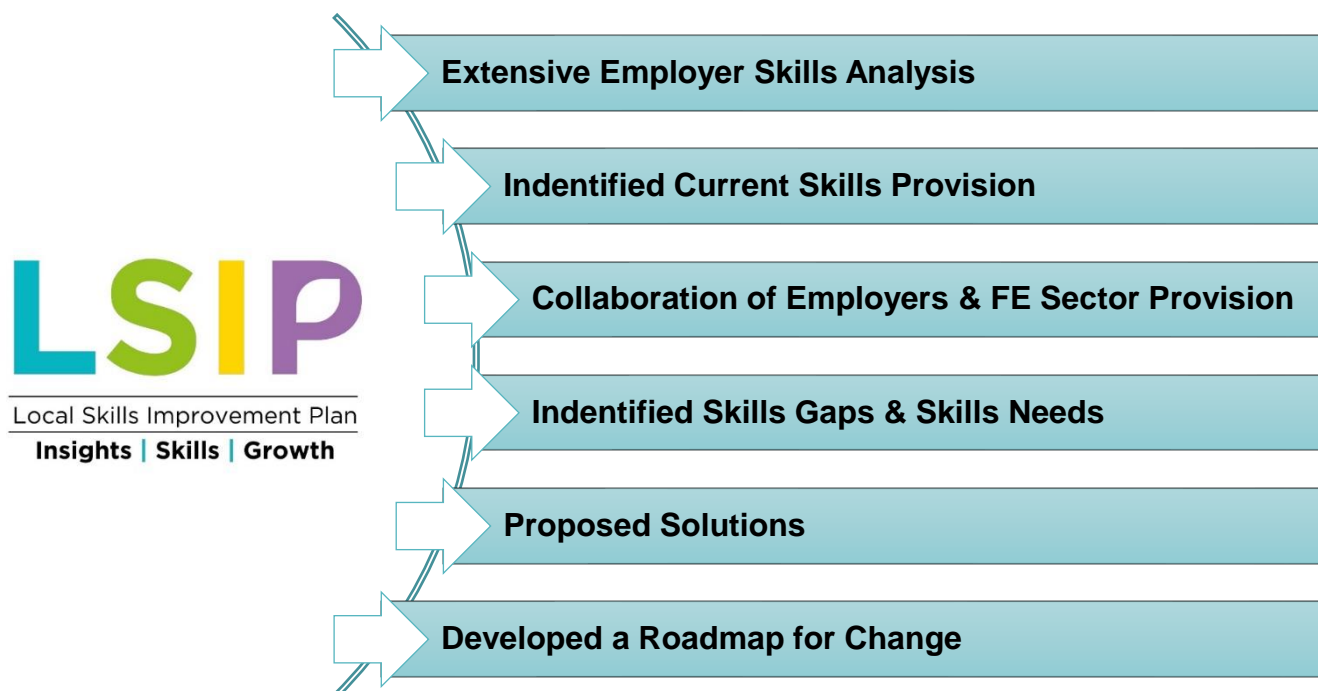
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1. Executive Summary

The Norfolk and Suffolk Local Skills Improvement Phase 1 – Delivered:



The Norfolk and Suffolk LSIP aims to address the skills gaps and shortages in the region by providing access to high-quality training, education, and employment opportunities for the local workforce. The plan recognises the importance of both technical and soft/skill skills in shaping the region's economic growth, competitiveness, and resident's higher earning potential.

Norfolk and Suffolk, as our data analysis suggests, are at a critical stage in local workforce development. With many infrastructure projects taking place over the next 5 years, the Norfolk and Suffolk Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) will provide a platform for the local FE and HE providers to convene and shape their engagement and provision with employers to address local skills needs.

As business focus changes and with the introduction of new digital and automation practices, it is vital that the LSIP can manoeuvre strategically to meet these demands. A robust monitoring and review system will be required to ensure that the employer's needs are consistently heard and that all stakeholders are actively involved in supporting the forward trajectory of the LSIP.

The plan focuses on four key priorities:

Enhancing educational outcomes: The plan aims to enhance collaboration with further education providers and employers to provide high-quality skills delivery that is aligned with the region's economic needs, enabling individuals to acquire the skills and knowledge into an increasingly digitised local job market.

Developing technical skills: The plan seeks to increase the region's technical skills in priority sectors, such as, but not limited to, Net Zero and Agri-Tech.

Skills for Employment: The plan will encourage the development of soft/impact skills such as communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and adaptability which are vital for employability and career progression.

Provide a 'Roadmap for Change': The plan aims to collaborate with local businesses, organisations, and stakeholders to provide a roadmap for new ideas, collaboration, and utilisation of existing and new funding for workforce development.

The Local Skills Improvement Plan for Norfolk and Suffolk will provide a mechanism to bridge the skills gap, encourage collaboration, and enhance the life potential for residents in the region through enhanced options for self-development. Through this plan, the region will be better equipped to meet the needs of a rapidly changing economy and workforce.

The LSIP can only be delivered by continuous collaboration with businesses, providers, the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP), Local Authorities and VCFSE organisations, and any relevant stakeholders working in partnership to drive the LSIP solutions to fruition, thereby supporting an improved and sustainable skills offering for all.

2. Methodology

Central to the LSIP objective was to establish a sufficient evidence base to form a picture of the skills challenges facing business in the current climate. Not only was it important for the LSIP to provide a platform with which employers could engage, it also required a strong and impactful brand that could be used across all channels.

The below model shows the breadth of engagement activity which has taken place and has provided the LSIP with granular data from business. This shaped the direction of travel for the priorities and has also highlighted significant areas for change as a by-product of the data skills analysis activity.

The LSIP brand was created on 3 themes for engagement:

- Insight
- Skills
- Growth

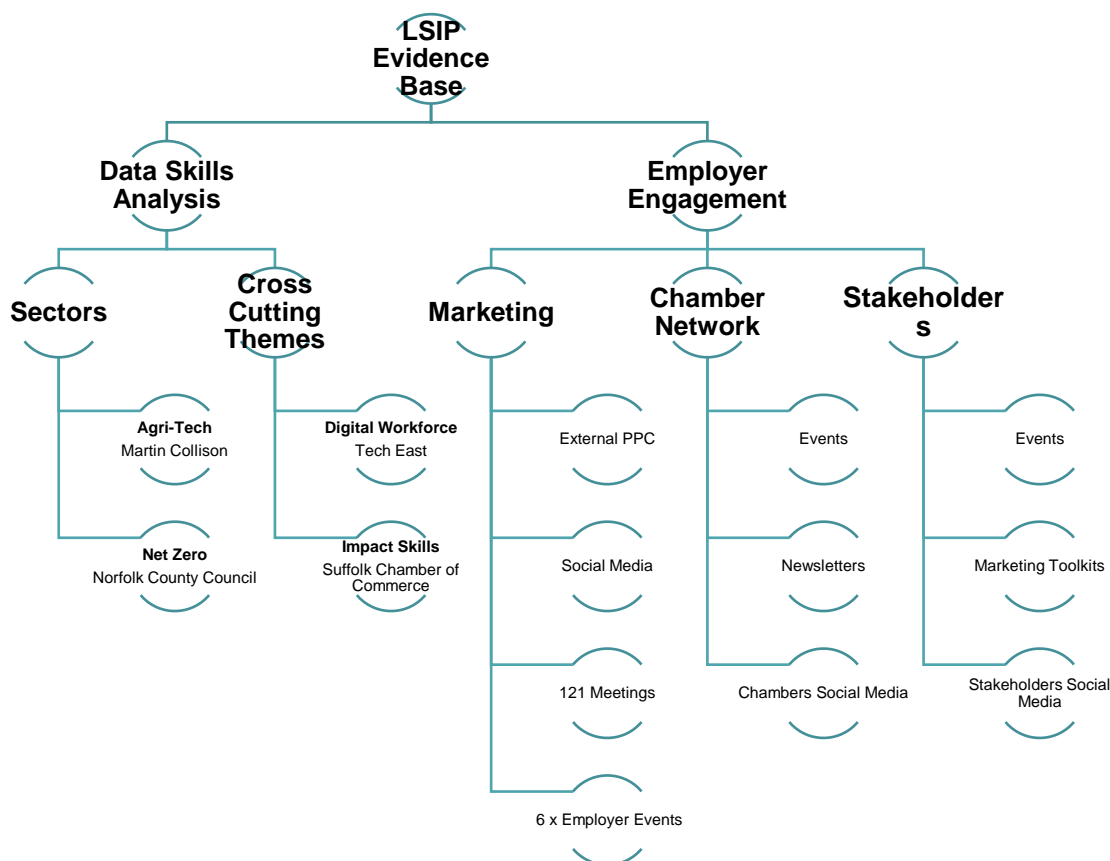
This provided a platform to have relevant business conversations with employers,



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through a range of engagement approaches, including but not limited to six region wide events, an extensive digital engagement programme and stakeholder interactions to discuss how skills and workforce development can affect the growth potential of their business.



3. LSIP Aims & Objectives

Statutory Guidance

- Set out the key priorities and changes needed in a local area to make post 16 technical education or training more responsive and closely aligned to local labour market needs.
- Provide a representative and coherent employer view of the skills most needed to support local economic growth and boost productivity and improve employability and progression for learners.
- Set out actionable priorities to better meet these skills needs that employers, providers and stakeholders in a local area can get behind to drive change in ways that add value to relevant local strategies and effectively join-up with other parts of the local skills system.

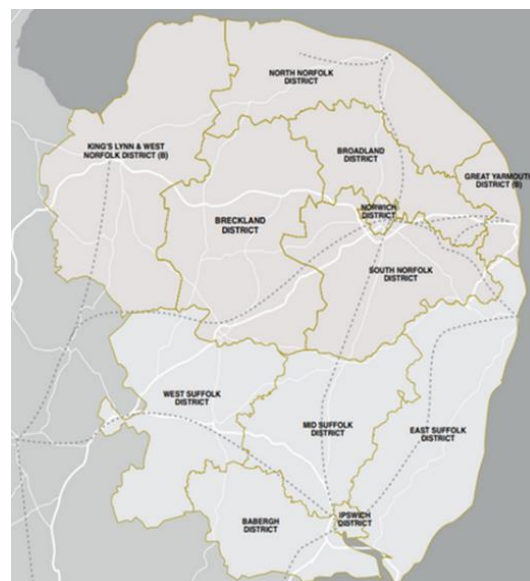
- Not attempt to cover the entirety of provision within an area but focus on the key changes and priorities that can gain traction and maximise impact informed by robust underpinning evidence, meaningful dialogue between employers and providers and constructive engagement with MCAs/GLA, LEP's, LAs and other stakeholders
- Be drawn up for a period of three years and be reviewed and updated as appropriate during this time to ensure it remains relevant and reflects the skills needs of the specified area.
- Describe how skills, capabilities and expertise required in relation to jobs that directly contribute to or indirectly support Net Zero targets, adaptation to Climate Change or meet other environmental goals have been considered.



4. Norfolk & Suffolk

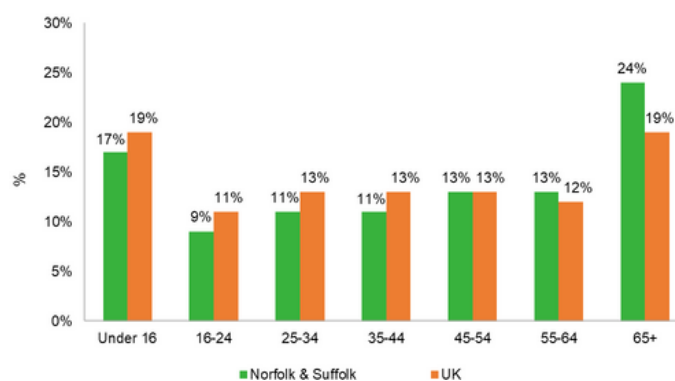
Norfolk and Suffolk are situated in the East of England comprised of 12 local authority districts (7 for Norfolk and 5 for Suffolk). The two biggest population centres are Norwich (Norfolk) and Ipswich (Suffolk). Other notable towns include Kings Lynn and Great Yarmouth in Norfolk and Lowestoft and Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk.

Both Norfolk and Suffolk are coastal regions which have attracted numerous energy companies. Historically, oil, gas and nuclear companies entered the region to capitalise on North Sea reserves, but more recently offshore wind has become a big part of the local economy. The area is also home to the Port of Felixstowe in Suffolk, the largest container port in the UK which is vital for UK trade and is now part of Freeport East.



Demographics

Norfolk and Suffolk's population is older than the average for England, with 44% of their population over 50 years old. This is higher than the average age in England where only 38% of the population are over 50. This difference becomes more profound when looking at the proportion of the population over 65. 24% of Norfolk and Suffolk's population is over 65 compared to 18.5% for England.



Source: LSIP Green Skills Exec Summary 2023

Office of National Statistics (ONS) internal migration flows data for Norfolk and Suffolk also shows there is a spike in migration into the region between the ages of 55-64. The ramifications of this are that attracting, retaining and developing a steady flow of young talent to replace a retiring work force is vitally important for Suffolk and Norfolk.

Also, as people move away for higher education this results in a significant emigration of 15-19 year-olds across Norfolk and Suffolk.

Higher education institutions such as the University of East Anglia and the University of Suffolk are effective in attracting and retaining a pipeline of young talent into the region. However, ONS data also suggests that there is a high exit rate of 25–39 year-olds in university areas, as seen in Norwich, suggesting graduate retention could be improved.

5. Local Economy

Norfolk and Suffolk contributed around £38bn in Gross Value Added (GVA) for the UK economy in 2019 (the latest year for which county level statistics are available). This has steadily been increasing over the years, in line with the national trend.

As shown in the graphic below, Norfolk and Suffolk are home to multiple and value-added sectors, ranging from A.I. and digital companies through to energy and Agri-Tech.

The region has a clear and growing strength in low carbon energy industry activity. It hosts offshore wind farms, hydrogen production and established nuclear power facilities, a range and density of low carbon generation of significant scale, nationally unique to this area. Which will require a long-term workforce servicing several sectors. There are opportunities for cross-sector innovation and the development of national and global expertise.

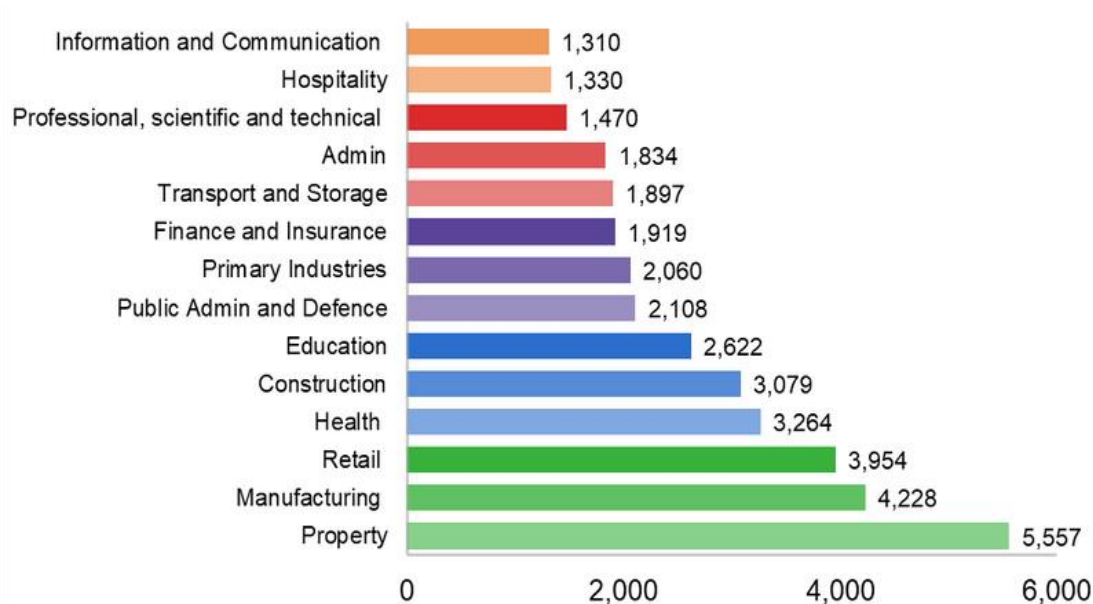
Source: LSIP Green Skills Exec Summary 2023



The top contributing sectors to GVA are evenly split between services like property, retail and health alongside other sectors such as manufacturing and construction.

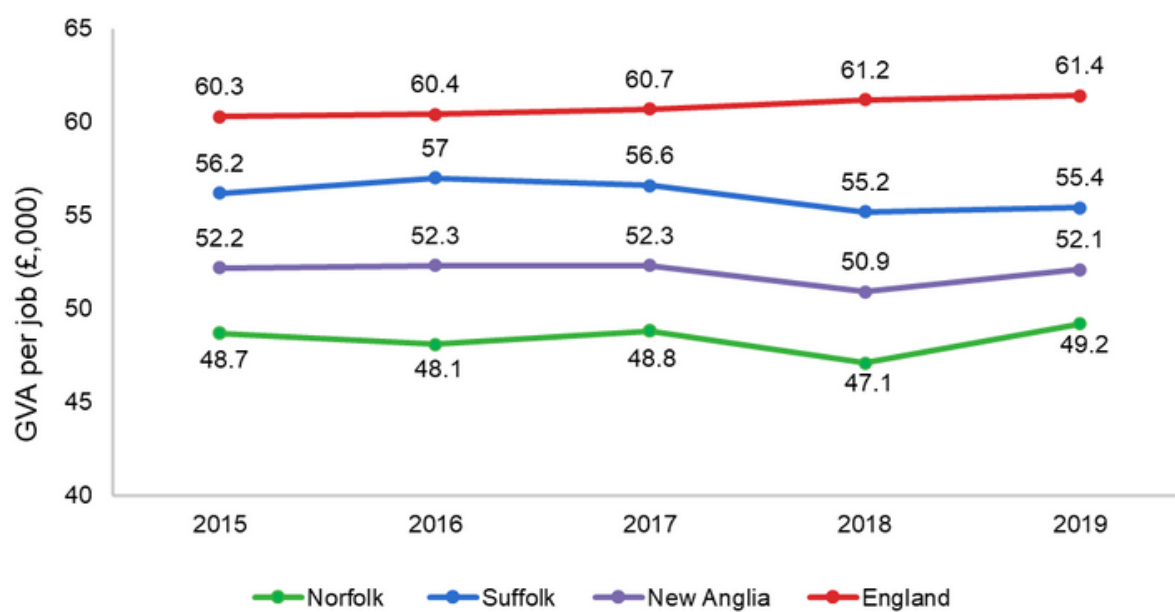
Norfolk and Suffolk's business base is largely dominated by SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) and micro businesses (99.7%) which is consistent with the rest of England statistics.

Source: LSIP Green Skills Exec Summary 2023



Norfolk and Suffolk's productivity expressed as GVA per job is below the England average. As shown in graph below, Norfolk is significantly below the national average with Suffolk a lot nearer.

Suffolk has witnessed a slight decrease in job productivity from 2015 to 2019, whereas Norfolk increased productivity. Evidence also indicates that median gross weekly wages for full-time workers in Norfolk and Suffolk (£565) are also considerably lower than those in England (£613).



Source: LSIP Green Skills Exec Summary 2023

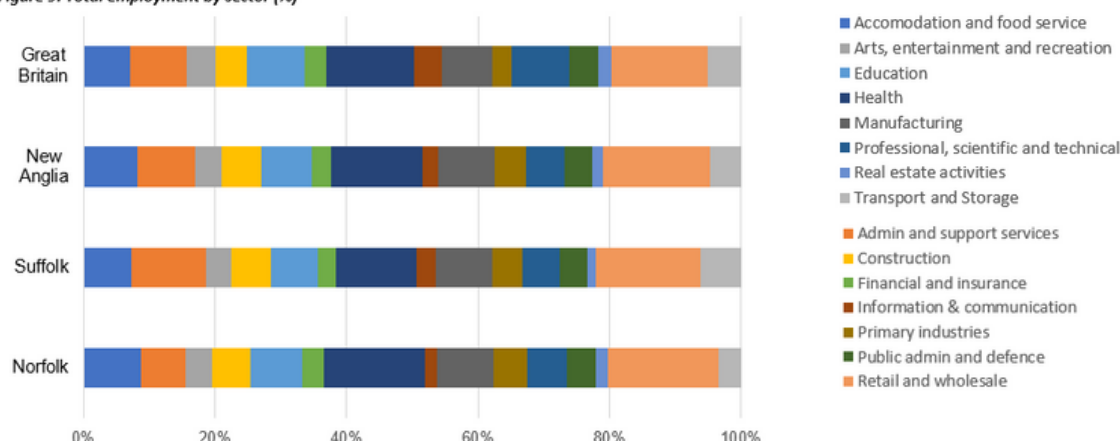
6. Jobs & Skills Base

Employment trends by sector across Norfolk and Suffolk are broadly in line with the average in Great Britain. One significant difference is the greater proportion of Norfolk's workforce in healthcare, relative to Great Britain and Suffolk - this is largely due to Norfolk's ageing population.

Other differences include a higher percentage of Norfolk workers being in the manufacturing sector, whereas both Norfolk and Suffolk have lower percentage of professional and scientific roles than the rest of Great Britain. Suffolk has a much greater proportion of its workforce than Norfolk and Great Britain in administration and support services.

A contributing factor that impacts the sector make up of a local region is the underlying education and skills level. Norfolk and Suffolk possess an economy which is skewed towards occupations requiring a lower-level of qualifications.

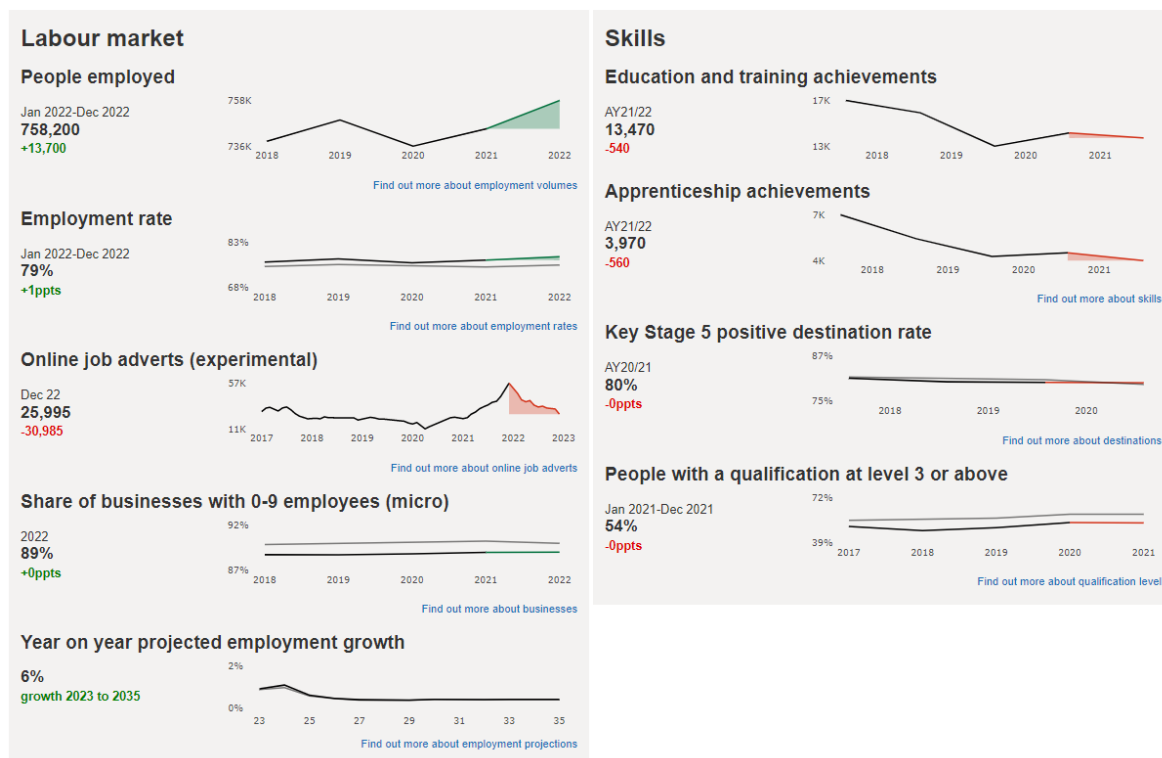
Figure 9: Total employment by sector (%)



Source: LSIP Green Skills Exec Summary 2023

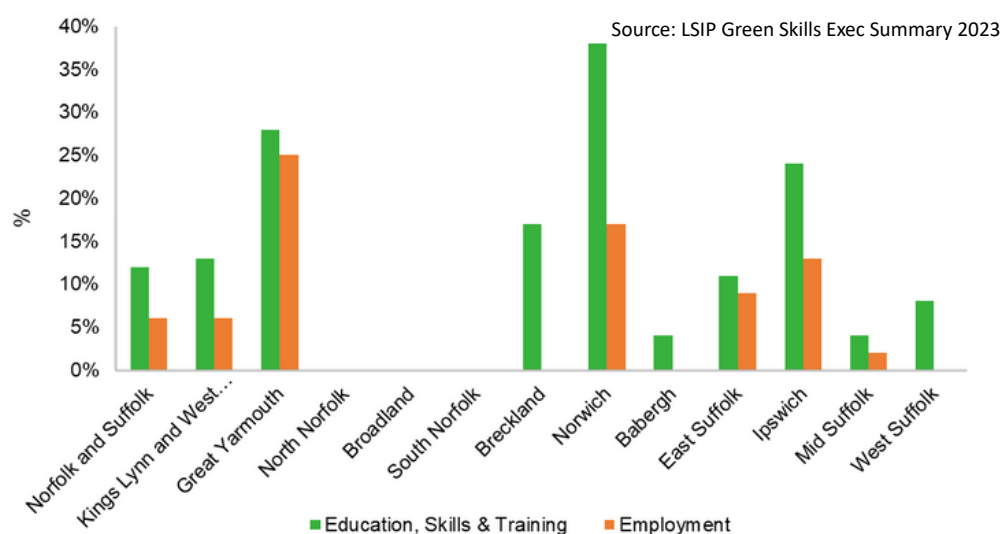
As the following data shows, which is taken from the local skills dashboard, (<https://department-for-education.shinyapps.io/local-skills-dashboard/>) the amount of people employed has increased significantly from 2021 – 2022 with an employment rate of 79%.

This is encouraging amidst growing concerns amongst business with rising wage and energy costs. The achievement of qualifications against these figures demonstrates the requirement for more action towards skills interventions within businesses targeted at workforce development.



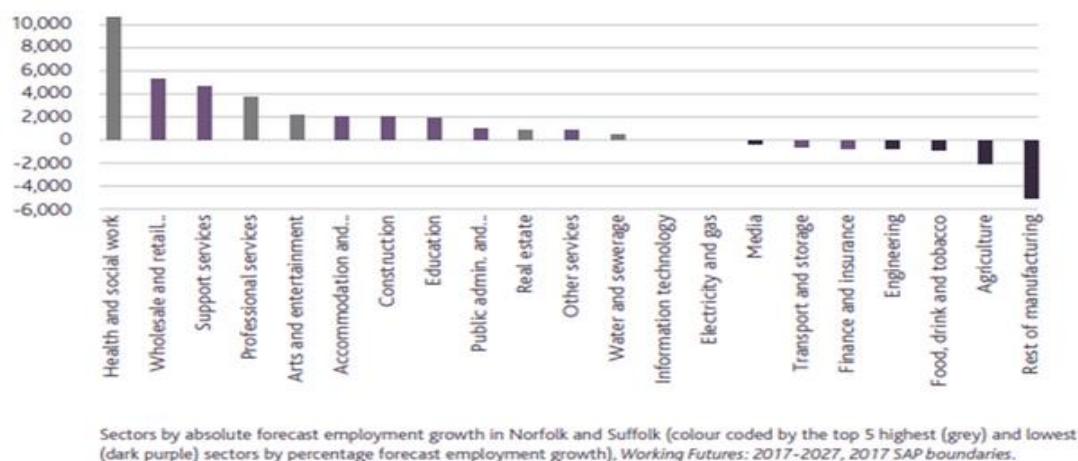
This is also reflected in the Employment and Education, Skills and Training metrics which make up the Index of Multiple Deprivation scoring. A significant number of Local Authorities in Norfolk and Suffolk experience deprivation in education, skills and training, especially in Great Yarmouth, Norwich, and Thetford in Norfolk and Ipswich in Suffolk.

The situation looks more encouraging for employment levels, possibly reflecting current roles in the region requiring lower skills for entry level role. However, Social/Skills mobility is recognised as a key priority for the local authorities and the provision of higher paid (Good Job/Fair Pay) employment opportunities. Lower skills levels and lower wages demonstrate that there could be significant room for local and national government to improve skills training provision.



The most recent analysis conducted by the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) looking at sector growth, based on historic trends, is a mixed picture from a low carbon heating and energy efficiency perspective. A modest increase in related construction jobs is positive, but much more growth will be needed to meet the region's Net Zero objectives.

Perhaps a more challenging aspect is that the retrofit skills report outlines the challenge of market drivers for new skills adoption. This is concerning given the rapid need to install energy efficiency measures (such as ground and air source heat pumps), over the coming years.



Source: New Anglia LEP Skills Report 2021 v7



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7. Local Skills System

Both counties benefit from an active and collaborative local skills system, which incorporates many stakeholders across an array of sectors. The diagram below demonstrates the breadth of delivery elements and the factors involved in gaining cross-sector and multi-agency feedback. Taking into consideration matters of skills interventions and the use of national and local funds for skills improvement are concerned.

The system combines private and public sector input, which has resulted in the delivery of many European Social Investment Fund (ESIF), locally and nationally funded skills projects. The LSIP plays a key role in the future of the skills system by providing an evidence base from employers, articulating current skills need and translating that into qualifications and working through solutions with the use of Working and Common Framework Groups.

County Councils

There is strong collaboration between the skills functions within both Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils.

Alongside the New Anglia LEP they have developed a joined-up approach to supporting the local skills needs of key industries across the region.

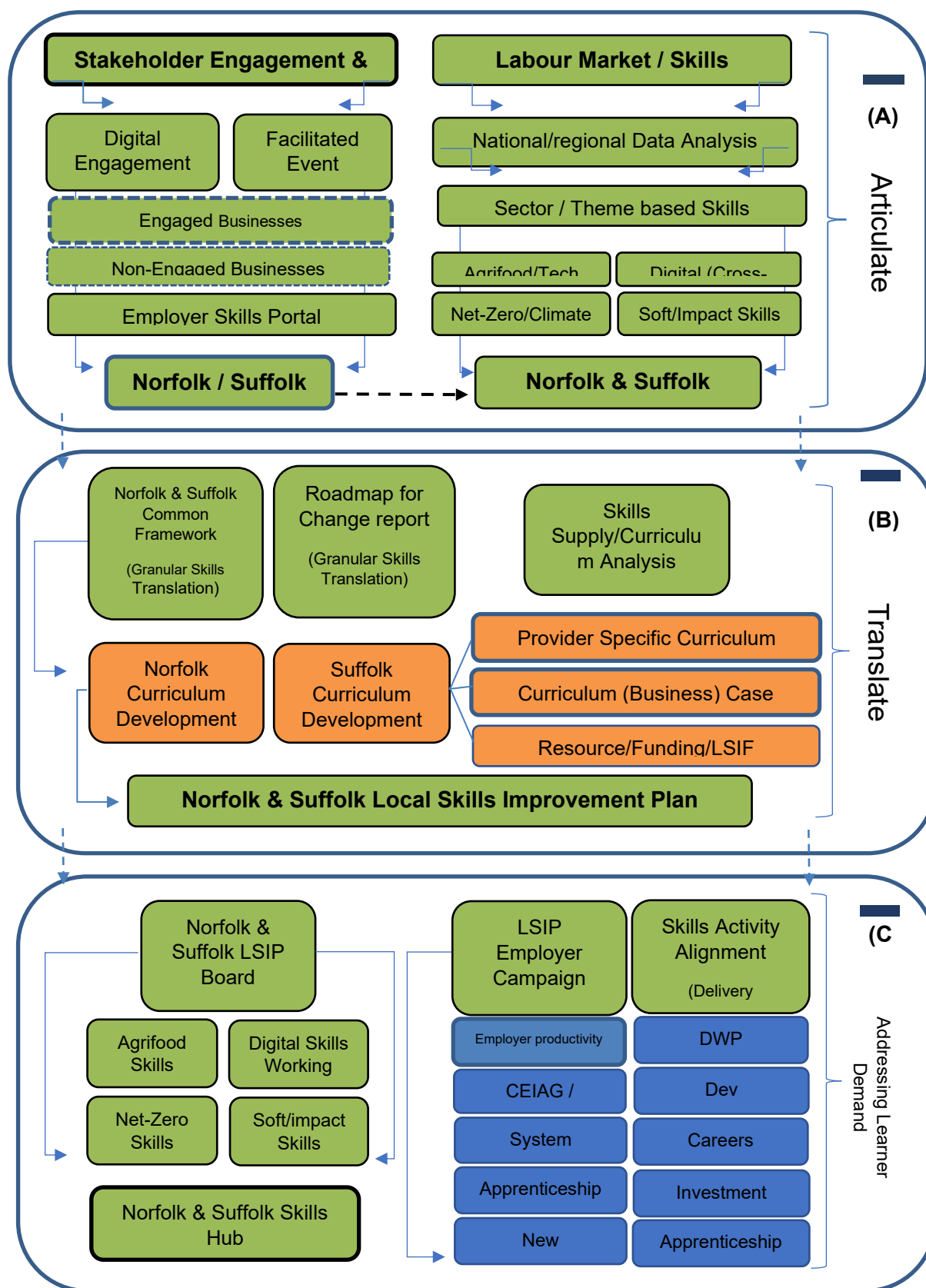
Skills professionals from each organisation work collectively as a 'Skills Hub' to deliver on a joint workplan that facilitates skills analysis, supports collaboration with HE, FE and independent training providers and identifies opportunities to link national and regional funding streams for activity supporting a sufficient supply of skills within the local workforce (e.g., Net Zero and Digital).



Developing a Skills System

For the LSIP to implement data an evidence base and deliver a system that is able to navigate the issues as they arise, the below "LSIP skills system" has been developed. It is designed to articulate employer-driven needs, translate this into solutions and the related skills needs into curriculum and qualification development. The "LSIP skills system" will also assess learner demand through the LSIP's role in galvanising the current Norfolk and Suffolk system, and in mobilising stakeholders with the existing local skills

system and employers. The sections in orange in the following diagram articulate the future development and will play a crucial part of LSIP Phase 2.



8. Existing Provision

Norfolk and Suffolk has a diverse range of skills and training opportunities to support individuals and businesses with their workforce development requirements.

Local provision includes Higher Education Universities, and Further Education College providers across both counties, as well a wide range of independent training providers; all of which offer apprenticeships, vocational courses and professional development programmes - ranging from short courses to longer degree programmes.

Additionally, the VCFSE sector provides/has provided skills development that feeds into the apprenticeship programmes and provides a resource that supports preparation for mainstream skills development programmes/activities.

Many of the providers have also been delivering European, nationally and locally funded programmes to support specific sectors and skills needs across many sectors, notably the Supply Chain Development Fund for Suffolk and the Employer Training Incentive Pilot for Norfolk.

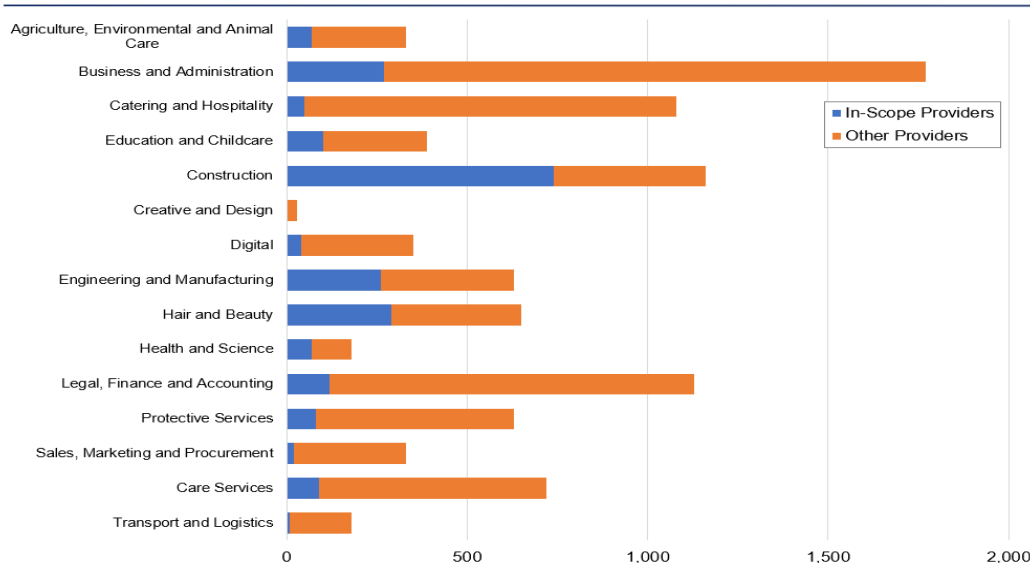
More recently, there have been funded programmes such as Skills Deals and Skills Bootcamps which are designed to work with employers to upskill new and existing staff to nationally recognised standards.

The region benefits from a huge amount of coverage in terms of apprenticeship training provision and has in excess of 80 providers both nationally and locally offering a cost-effective route for training. Data provided by the ILR data from local FE colleges suggests that there is scope for more partnerships to be made with employers and providers in technical areas such as Digital, Engineering and Agriculture.

The apprenticeship delivery area is well supported by locally funded Norfolk Apprenticeships and Apprenticeship Suffolk initiatives that offer impartial support for businesses in the form of advice and guidance on apprenticeship routes.

Apprenticeship Starts by Technical Route – 2021/22

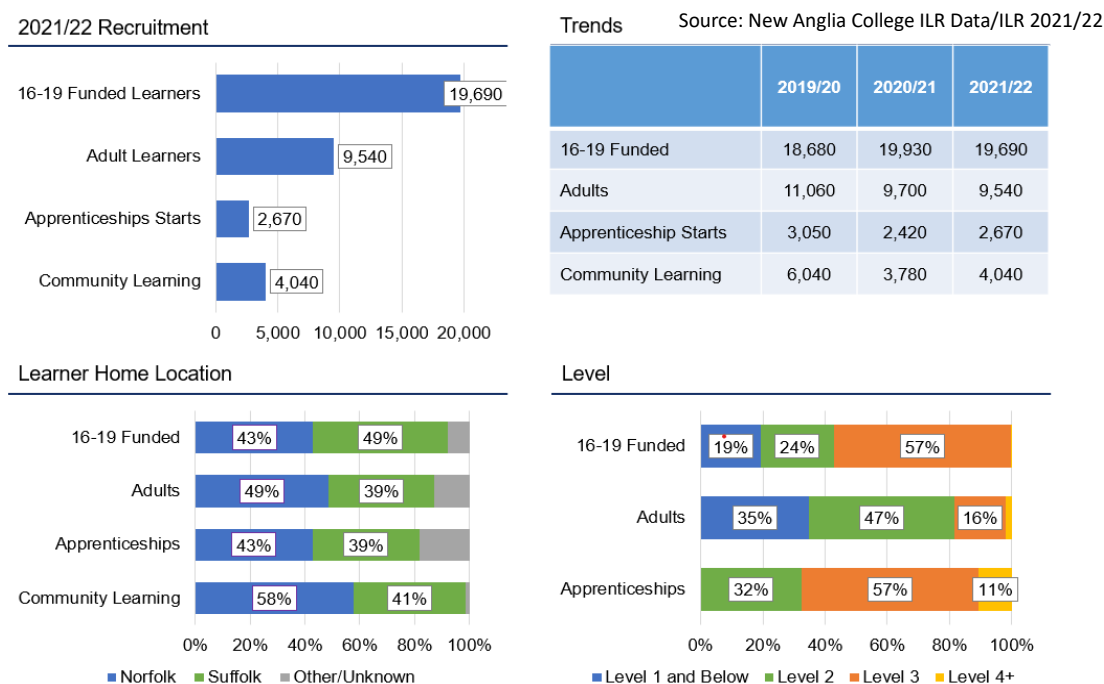
Source: New Anglia College ILR Data/ILR 2021/22



Source: ILR 2021/22 (R14)



Provided by college stakeholders, this data, taken from the ILR report, suggests that there is a range of provision which is taking place across the counties. If the respective County Deals for Norfolk and Suffolk are delivered, then there could be even more scope within locally devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) funding to target a range of provision aligned with the LSIP as a reference point for employer need. Provision could then be targeted more effectively towards local needs e.g. more Level 3 qualified adult learners. With the latest phase of bootcamps, being managed by New Anglia LEP, this could be a very effective pathway into Level 3 qualifications.



The trends above appear to show an overall downturn in the number of learners taking up training within colleges. This could be largely due to the effect of COVID-19 and the impact on aspirational values changing for individuals. Although college delivery of apprenticeships seems to have decreased, the latest ESFA data shows that both Norfolk and Suffolk are above the national average in the take-up of apprenticeships, mainly aided by additional local funding and support for businesses. The most recent of which, “The Levy Sharing” scheme, will also have an impact locally.

This downturn could also be due to the lack of engagement from business with the skills system as they are still in ‘survival’ mode post the national pandemic and the challenging economic landscape. This view further compounds the evidence that the LSIP can and will be the catalyst for change, incorporating the solutions set out below, working alongside Suffolk New College, who are the Local Skills Improvement Fund lead provider.

Our LSIP has encouraged participation and collaboration from local providers from its inception, by having a cross-section of provision represented in the Working Groups and as part of the LSIP Board. The LSIP project team has already assisted FE colleges with the completion of accountability statements and is working with Ofsted on their plans for enhanced inspections.

9. LSIP Priorities

Industries

Agri-Food/Tech

The Agri-food/Tech sector contributes 13% to the Norfolk and Suffolk economy and employs 50,000 staff across the sub-region, circa 7.4% of the workforce. Since 2004 the sector has seen a fall in elementary occupations from 26% to 15% and a rise in the demand of skilled trades from 40% to 58%. There is significant employer drive for food chain automation, Brexit adjustment and food price/energy pressures, meaning that this regionally important sector is a priority for LSIP focus.

Net-Zero

HM Government's 10-point plan for a green industrial revolution provides the steer for the LSIP to engage with the clean energy sectors and explore opportunities for increased green/de-carbonisation skills, ascertain higher technical requirements and drive job creation. The LSIP will align with the government's green jobs task force ([Green Jobs Taskforce - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/taskforces/green-jobs)). The LSIP will assist in the evaluation of the workforce requirements needed to meet emerging industry demand assisting in the evaluation of the workforce requirements needed to meet emerging industry demand and gaps in provision.

Cross Cutting Themes

Workforce Digital

Digitisation is a key driver of skill change across Norfolk and Suffolk. This is recognised and evidenced within New Anglia LEP cross-cutting skills reports and the DfE Local Skills report as well as the Essential Digital Skills Framework as set out by government - [Essential digital skills framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/frameworks/essential-digital-skills-framework). The digital skills of the workforce are increasingly critical to businesses, as demonstrated by the universal shift to digital-first interactions such as remote working, online commerce, and virtual collaboration. While this change has produced many benefits, like greater flexibility of work location for workers and removing geography as a barrier to hiring new talent, it has also resulted in the widening of an existing skills gap.

Soft / Impact Skills

To develop a higher skilled workforce, a key challenge is to ensure that interventions (financial, project and cultural/strategic) are made in education and training to improve soft/impact and employability skills – helping the workforce to become more able to respond to technological change and a demanding range of working environments. The Norfolk and Suffolk LSIP therefore also focuses on the soft/impact skills of the workforce, defining these for local stakeholders and providing the means through which productivity, competitiveness, economic growth, and the overall employment rate can increase in the locality.

10. LSIP Priorities for Action

Through the extensive skills analysis work which has taken place the below highlights headline themes across the priorities. These come from granular level detail from business interactions, which will form the basis of priorities moving forward. It will allow the LSIP to gain more knowledge and insight from stakeholders and start to form action plans to shape the current skills landscape across both Net Zero and Agri-Tech as industries and the two essential cross-cutting themes.

Agri-Tech/Food Processing

Workforce Supply

- Many of the employers engaged have been growing but finding labour supply is a major constraint on growth.
- Every employer is finding it hard to secure staff in the numbers needed. Whilst this difficulty is normally perceived and reported as a problem for basic roles (e.g. fruit picking), it is actually at every level with some significant gaps in professional areas such as environmental management as government policy begins to push the importance of this area of work.

Engagement with Providers

- Surveyed employers have little in-depth contact with local mainstream providers i.e. the FE colleges and universities.
- Some good examples of employer engagement with providers include the stakeholder groups and employer-led Skills Bootcamps at Suffolk Rural, but many employers still report a lack of understanding of FE provision in this area.

In-House Delivery & National Programmes

- In-house provision tends to be more flexible, is available when they need it and is tailored to business need which most public sector provision is not.
- Multiple employers reported that they had been moving training in house where possible. To do this they have appointed dedicated internal staff to do this or have developed their management team capacity to be able to support training activity.
- Several consultees have resorted to using national providers or set up their own national schemes (either alone or with other businesses) as they cannot find any local provision. In some cases this is due to the specialist nature of what they need, in others it's because local providers lack (and are unable to recruit) specialist teaching staff.

Automation & Machinery

- The automation agenda is now creating a real shortfall in engineers, both in end user businesses and in technology suppliers. Lead times on new systems are thus being extended due to the lack of engineers at every level of the system. Providers are finding it impossible to address this, both as it appears too few people want to be engineers and because lecturers can earn 50%+ more in industry than teaching. Unless this is addressed, UK Agri-Tech/food processing productivity problems and workforce shortages will remain. This cuts across all levels of requirements of attracting younger talent and having the correct skills at a higher level. T-Levels could support this activity with a clear offer to employers.

Digital & Stem

- Digital skills are a gap for most businesses and in some cases linked to automation, but also with a broader role in business systems. For example, a large consultancy business knows it needs to understand how to integrate multiple software systems used by its farm clients and internally, however it does not have the digital and API skills to do this.
- Multiple employers and Agri-Tech businesses are looking at how to effectively manage the ever-larger volumes of data which are being generated by digital systems. There is a broad view that more skills in data analysis and utilisation are needed to help the industry deliver the new systems which promise greater productivity, sustainability and resilience.

Environment

- A major theme across multiple consultees has been the growth in the demand for environmental skills of all types from energy, water and waste, to how new land management schemes will work. All farms and food businesses will need to embrace this change but most lack the skills to do so. Most of these skills gaps are for management, auditing, and compliance rather than for manual/physical delivery of action, so are typically skills at Level 5+.

Food Technology

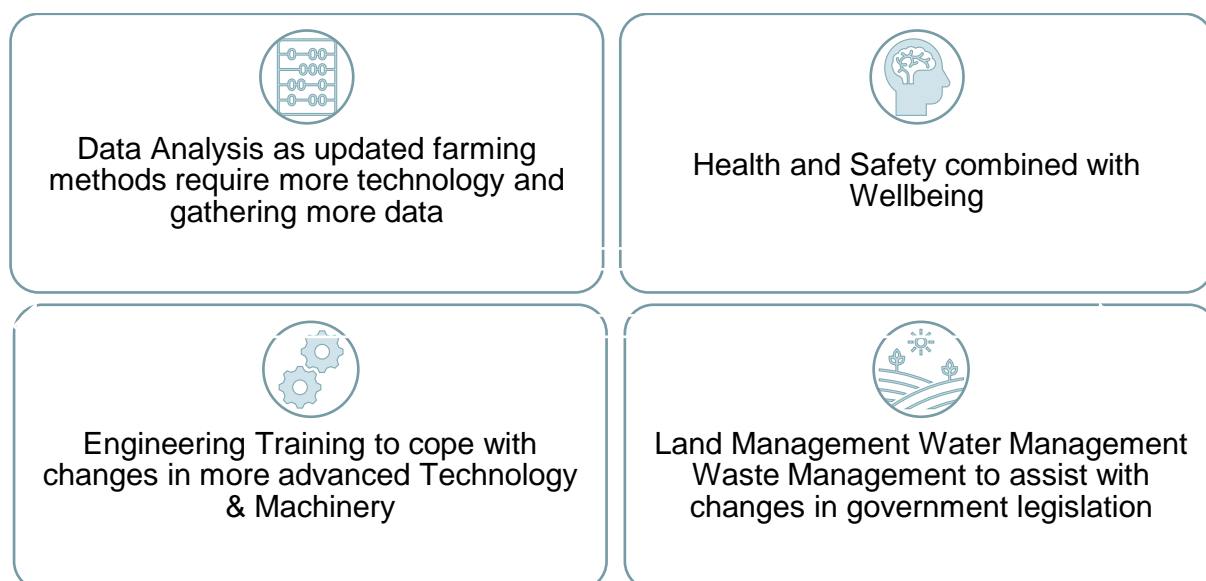
- Overall, the growth of the added value food chain is seen as having problems with workforce supply, compounded by a gap in local training provision in food processing, auditing and food supply chain development.
- Specific areas such as butchery were flagged as a problem, with one business which focuses in this sector changing their whole business model to remove the need for butchers as they could not source them.



Supporting Change

- The introduction of 'T Levels' is not understood by most employers and there are significant practical concerns about whether they can be delivered effectively in Norfolk and Suffolk for the Agri-Tech and Food Processing sector.
- Positive engagement is needed with employers to involve them in developing provision and to ensure their input and feedback is used effectively, building on and learning from existing good practice

Agri-Tech/Food Processing Priorities



Net Zero

- Preliminary analysis suggests that in the gradual ramp up to Net Zero by 2030 scenario, a peak of around 180,000 FTE jobs will be required by 2029 in Norfolk and Suffolk across 8 technology areas. These jobs will be distributed fairly equally between Norfolk and Suffolk, with around 95,000 FTE jobs being needed in Norfolk and 85,000 FTE jobs needed in Suffolk.
- The largest job creation sectors identified from the preliminary analysis are energy storage, large solar PV installations and onshore and offshore wind which make up a significant portion of the future jobs. Whilst offshore and onshore wind starts from a relatively good baseline of jobs (via offshore wind capability), significant growth in jobs is required with all these areas starting from a low workforce base.
- Notable regional differences include Suffolk's high penetration of bioenergy in local energy generation and the greater hydrogen penetration in Norfolk. The job numbers listed here are a factor of two main assumptions: the size of future generation capacity / low carbon technology installations and the number of jobs associated per generation capacity.

Source: Wider Green Skills Report 2023

Sector	Norfolk total jobs 2029 (FTE)	Suffolk total jobs 2029 (FTE)	Norfolk & Suffolk total jobs 2029 (FTE)
Onshore and offshore wind	20,753	9,069	29,822
Large solar PV (>150kW)	21,892	17,960	39,852
Carbon capture and storage	92	52	144
Renewable CHP	20	11	31
Bioenergy	2,698	11,459	14,158
Hydrogen	6,674	521	7,195
EV charging installation	2,400	1,680	4,080
Energy storage	41,095	43,926	85,020
Total jobs	95,624	84,678	180,302

This LSIP will develop strategies and solutions towards these Net Zero priorities:

- Facilitate knowledge sharing between local authorities, green industries, and training providers for the creation of business led training provision.
- Prioritise bringing through the next generation of green skilled workers, low carbon and insulation installers for Net Zero and Retrofit skills.
- Incentivise innovative models of training through hybrid online courses, shorter and part time courses or training provision via trade associations.
- Actively promote relevant training courses to local installers to reduce the search cost burden and tackle perceived risks in engaging in training.

These strategies will incorporate the following skills, aligned to key market drivers, and government net zero objectives:

Skills Needed	Qualification	Occupation
Heat Source Installer	BPEC Heat Pump Systems	Heat Source Installer/Plumbing
Retrofitting Energy Efficiencies	Advisor/Assessor for Retrofitting	Retrofit Energy Assessor
EV Charging Point Installation	Installation and Commissioning of Electric Vehicle Charging L2	EV Installer/Electrical Trade
Solar Thermal hot water Installation	Installation and Maintenance of Solar Thermal Hot Water Systems L3	Plumbing Trade
Offshore Wind	GWO Certification	Wind Turbine Technician

Soft / Impact Skills

The following chart indicates that the LSIP research has identified team-work, communication and problem solving as the most pressing soft/impact skills training needs. Leadership and critical thinking were also very relevant to businesses.

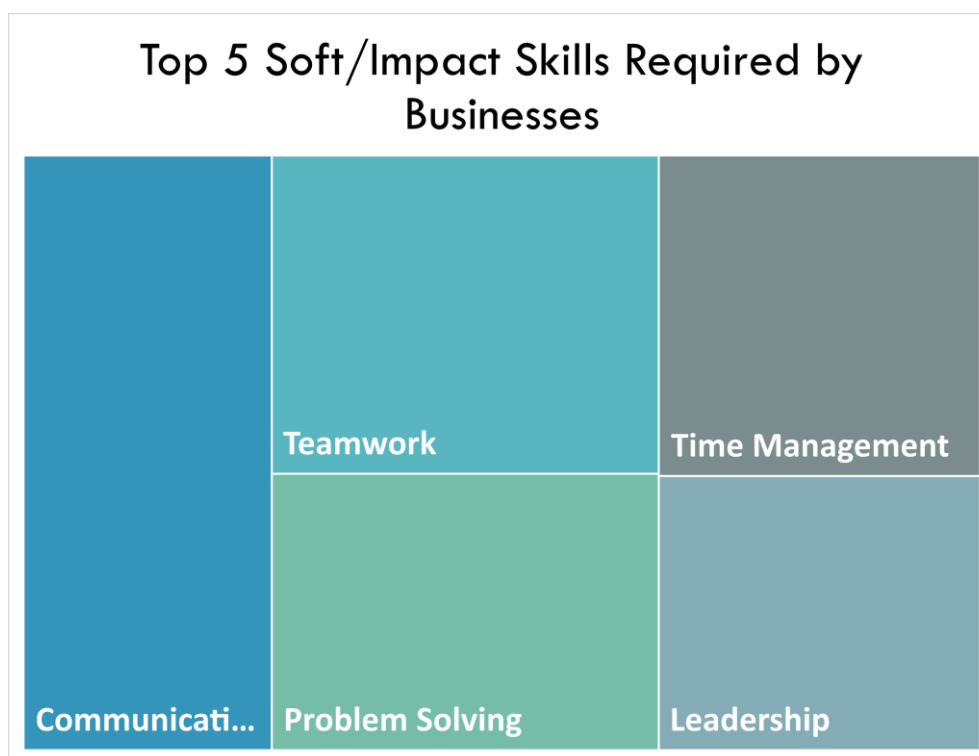
Research highlighted that soft/impact skills needs are a requirement for nearly all businesses for new employees and that there is a requirement for these skills to be a fundamental part of any training. Whilst we are aware that these skills are embedded within many existing training courses, it appears to be difficult for employers to access the required training and to navigate the local skills system effectively.

Business feedback displayed a consistent lack of reference to specific qualifications and attainment levels – suggesting this is not language that business owners are conversant in or frequently deploy in their day-to-day operations.

There is a real concern among employers that a lot of national training provision is too focused on 'hard' skills, courses for which are often out of date by the time training takes place (due to the lag between employers' skills needs being integrated into national curriculum frameworks and standards), with too little focus on what employers really want which in many instances is soft/impact skills.

Significant feedback was received that employers will provide the technical skills needed if prospective staff have the attitudes and aptitude to learn, meaning soft/impact skills and basic technical skills or awareness will make them a good employee.

Multiple employers are now bringing in staff from outside their industry if they have the basic interpersonal and learning skills needed, and then training them in the specifics of the sector.



Source: LSIP Analysis Data 2023



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Workforce Digital Skills

As the following chart shows social media for marketing is the most commonly referenced digital skills need with 54.2% of businesses surveyed selecting this need, although Microsoft Applications was also a common choice – with 48.4% of respondents selecting this need.

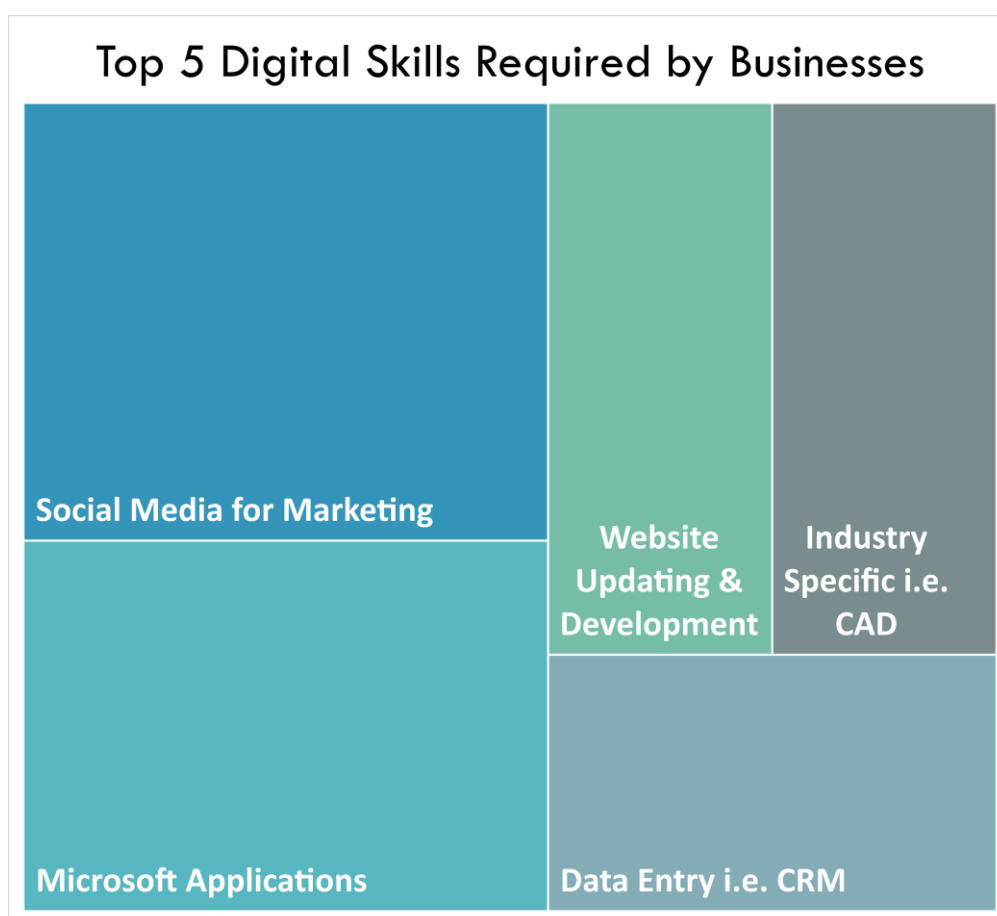
21% of survey respondents cited web-based reports skills needs (e.g., Google analytics etc.) Only 11% cited coding and software development as a pressing skill need.

The survey suggested there needs to be greater openness by employers to considering newer forms of training e.g., Apprenticeships, T Levels and Bootcamps.

There is a shift towards new modes of learning e.g. free, or low-cost self-learning online via YouTube, Udemy, peer to peer knowledge sharing and networking over traditional training.

Current public funding is considered to be too prescriptive to deliver timely digital skills interventions for the majority of employers.

However, our local skills system includes a range of highly regarded intermediaries although it is viewed by employers as a 'patchwork' and difficult to navigate.



Source: LSIP Analysis Data 2023



Funded by
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Commerce



Norfolk
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Commerce

Cross Sector Priorities

The LSIP conducted in depth analysis of employer skills needs based on the four priorities. This analysis shows that it is apparent that there is a gap between the training provision that exists in Norfolk and Suffolk and employers' skills needs.

Another issue for many businesses is being able to access the right training provision from the right provider and being able to navigate the local skills system from an outsider's perspective.

The priorities outlined below have and will help to address these issues and due to their importance will continue to be discussed and worked through by the LSIP Working and Common Framework Groups.

There is also already good work happening in the local skills system that is tackling these important issues and the LSIP project team will proactively support solutions around engagement and connectivity between providers and employers.

Accessibility:

Employers need to understand the skills landscape and how to access skills training provision more easily.

Knowledge:

Needed around T-Levels and other qualifications and an understanding of how they can be used within an employer.

Advice & Guidance:

Employers understand the skills required but do not know how this relates to qualifications.

Engagement:

Providers to be more responsive and inclusive in their approach to training and employer engagement, creating working partnerships instead of transactional relationships.

11. Skills Translation

A large part of the challenge for the LSIP project team when engaging with employers is to translate the skills needs and gaps presented into qualifications which are already being delivered and that therefore need to be showcased to employers as a training solution; or potentially could be developed further to meet current needs.



There is a real need for this translation work to take place. As a result, the Common Framework Group has been developing the common language that can be used to help businesses understand what a qualification offers. This translation work will help with close the gap between business skills needs and the qualifications currently available to deliver.

The following graphic shows examples of where skills have been translated into qualifications. The LSIP has already start to influence some of the existing skills provision with both data and digital marketing being offered as part of the latest phase of Skills Bootcamp provision, which offers a clear progression route into apprenticeships in both skill sets.

Skills Needed	Qualification	Occupation
Marketing	Digital Marketing Level 2/3	Marketing Assistant
Data Analysis	Data Analysis Level 4	Data Analyst
Data Entry	Data Technician Level 3	Data Entry Clerk
Website Updates	Web Development Level 3	Web Developer
Maintenance Engineering	Engineering Level 3 & 4	Mechanical Engineer
Land Management	Countryside Management BSc	Land Manager
Water Management	Water Efficiency in the Workplace Level 2	Environmental/Sustainability Manager
Waste Management	CIWM Waste Management Apprenticeships	Environmental Manager
Heat Source Installer	BPEC Heat Pump Systems	Heat Source Installer/Plumbing
Retrofitting Energy Efficiencies	Advisor/Assessor for Retrofitting,	Retrofit Energy Assessor
EV Charging Point Installation	Installation and Commissioning of Electric Vehicle Charging L2	EV Installer/Electrical Trade
Solar Thermal hot water Installation	Installation and Maintenance of Solar Thermal Hot Water Systems L3	Plumbing Trade

This can be further supported by the IFATE resources for occupational pathways, which can assist individuals and employers to map a career path using qualifications. The real challenge is then sourcing the training provision that exists locally, which is where

the LSIP can assist businesses to bridge the gap.

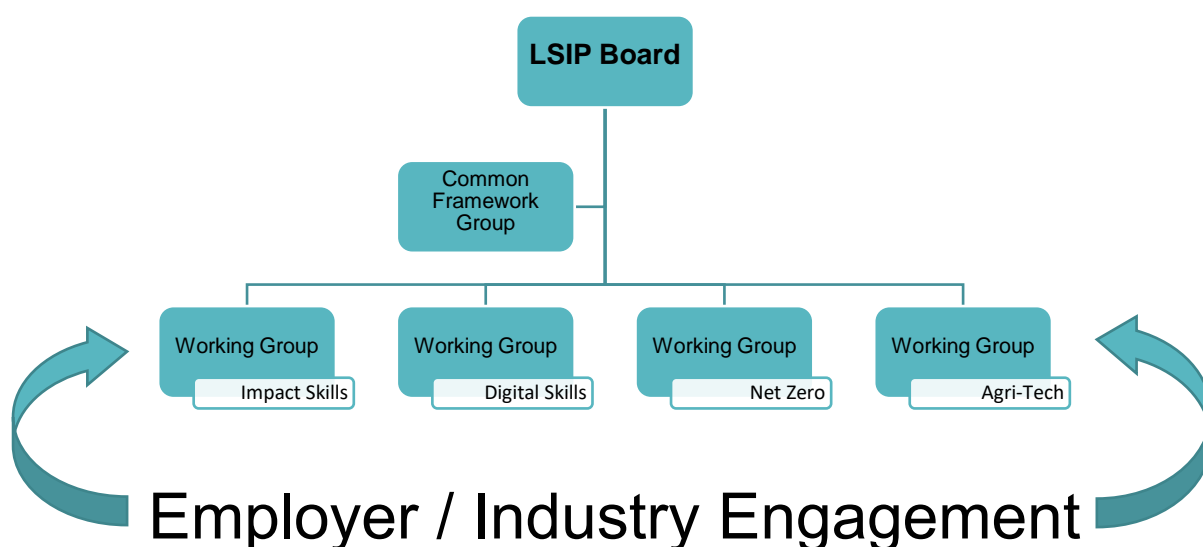
Occupational Maps: Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) occupational maps show where technical education can lead

Explore the IfATE occupational maps by selecting a route below:



12. Working & Common Framework Groups

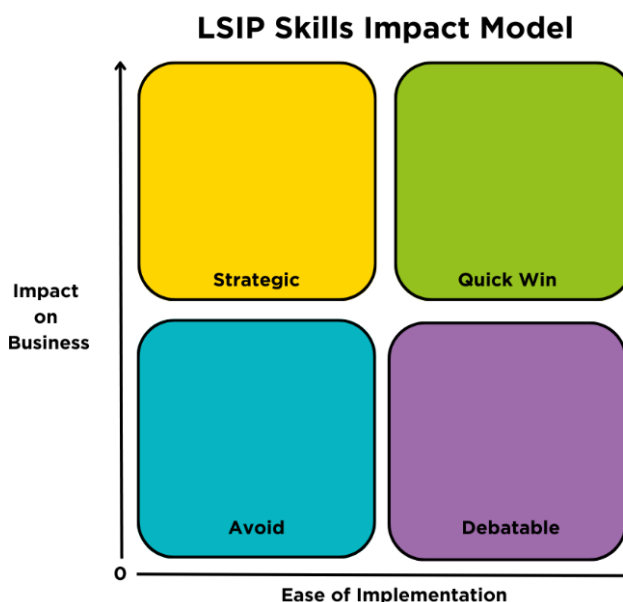


The Working Groups have been meeting to discuss possible skills needs solutions based on the data that has been provided by the extensive LSIP employer research.

Using the impact model (below) the LSIP challenges stakeholders to encourage solutions that are both quick wins and strategic. These maximise impact on business and present short, medium and long-term solutions. The working group is made up of business representatives and local training provision representative at an operational level.

The LSIP Common Framework Group has met to discuss solutions arising from the working groups, and more recently with the support of the Local Skills Improvement Fund lead provider (Suffolk New College).

This group consists of local industry leaders, education professionals and VCFSE representatives will start to form project-based solutions as set out in the following section and will continue to meet monthly across the 3-year duration of the project.



13. LSIP Solutions for Focus

LSIP Solution: 'Project 1st' – (*In Development*)

Project Objective: Standardise training package across the region.

A programme of short bite-sized courses in priority theme areas - digital and green skills - which will be developed and delivered as a consistent programme across all 5 FE colleges in Norfolk and Suffolk, and key local independent training providers. This project will deliver the same course offer across all our geographic locations and market the offer as a single package, in collaboration with our Chamber of Commerce partners and other key stakeholders.

This initiative aims to cut right across the 'noise' of complex training provision, bringing new businesses to the table to understand what is on offer locally and to engage with local providers to build new networks and to broaden our skills development reach.

Building on the collaborative planning developed in the Strategic Development Fund New Anglia Green Skills project, the colleges will aim to work together with other providers through the LSIF programme. Developing the project and to work with a wide range of stakeholders including employers to ensure unparalleled marketing reach in the region, as well as consulting with employers' on the detailed content of the course offer.

This initiative will provide a platform for more engagement with training providers across the region, as many of the usual challenges of marketing and competition will have

been removed. Ongoing evaluation of the programme through the roadmap, allows a changing of direction based on effectiveness and impact on the skills landscape.

This will be a flagship programme for the LSIP which incorporates many of the skills gaps that have been identified through the extensive data collection, particularly as stated in the Workforce Digital cross cutting theme.

LSIP Solution: Priority Provision Mapping

Project Objective: Knowledge sharing improving accessibility to training.

The research reviewed by our working groups has identified that businesses find it difficult to understand the range of training and delivery across the HE and FE sector. The working groups solution is to map the provision of the local providers and share this across the LSIP web portal.

Development of this will include a commitment from providers to report on changes to their delivery on an ongoing scheduled basis, as well as having a function for Employers to easily search according to sector/skills/qualification. This can be referenced to the IFATE occupational maps also ensuring that existing (more local) resources are referenced such as the 'icanbea' ([Careers & Ideas in Norfolk & Suffolk](#)) web portal for careers development.

The project aims to create a map of how and where business can access relevant funding and provision in a clearly digestible and workable format.

A full roadmap will be developed and include the relevant stakeholders and those accountable for delivery.

LSIP Solution: Common Language Response

Project Objective: Improve access to local provision.

Feedback from our employer networks notes that often the language used in the Skills sector is not always relatable to business, causing a barrier to engagement. Our response is to develop a common, accessible, and inclusive language with our employer. The LSIP will develop a region-wide response to breaking down this barrier. Developing this further, a common guide to the skills landscape will help employers understand which organisations are involved in skills training and how they work together. Alongside this, demystifying and myth-busting issues such as how newer programmes (e.g. apprenticeships and T-Levels) lie in relation to career touch points.

A full roadmap will be developed and include the relevant stakeholders and those accountable for delivery.

LSIP Solution: Net Zero Private Sector Funding for Training

Project Objective: Unlocking funding streams.

With the region experiencing significant growth in offshore wind and renewable energy, developers must as part of their planning consent provide a grant fund for up-skilling of the local workforce. All Nationally significant infrastructures projects (NSIPs) are required to develop a Skills and Employment Plan (in consultation with Norfolk County Council / Suffolk County Council) the LSIP aims to coordinate Phase 2 delivery with the

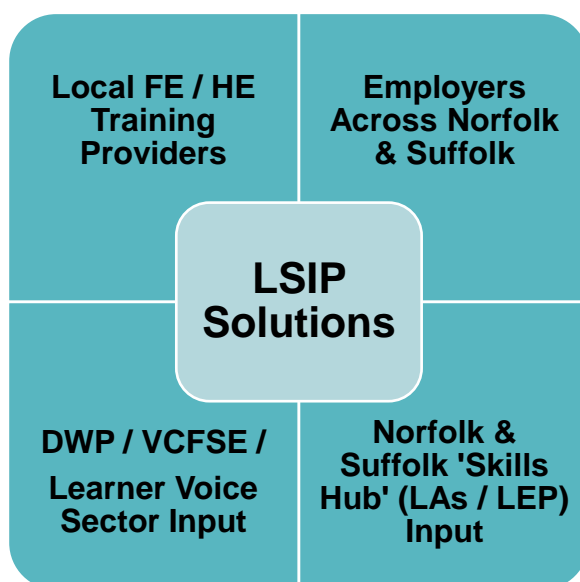
objectives of these plans, ensuring strategic alignment and shared objectives to best utilise the Community Benefit Funds. This will including putting together a consortium of provision for this sector to pitch to developers such as Orsted, Vattenfall and Sizewell C to trial training programmes in the local areas, with a view to more long-term investment in skills, utilising their expertise of workforce development and career aspiration activity.

A full roadmap will be developed and include the relevant stakeholders and those accountable for delivery.

Impact of Solutions

The solutions outlined will play a crucial role in delivering the outcome and Impact required for the LSIP, therefore they will:

- **Drive workforce and to develop practical methods of support through which employers can promote and equip employee training/upskilling.**
- **Continued consultation and co-development with employers.**
- **LSIP to facilitate and act as conduit “convenor” between training providers**
- **Support the application of local and national skills policy, including DfE Skills Bootcamps, Flexible skills for jobs.**
- **Actively involve stakeholders with access to those businesses in the VCFSE.**
- **Encourage uptake of training by those who previously disengaged with training.**



Delivering Impact

The solutions outlined are targeted to have significant impact on workforce development lead by Norfolk and Suffolk Chambers of Commerce and facilitate the collaboration between the Colleges, Stakeholders and most importantly the employers, all of which will be required to have an active role, which is outlined below:

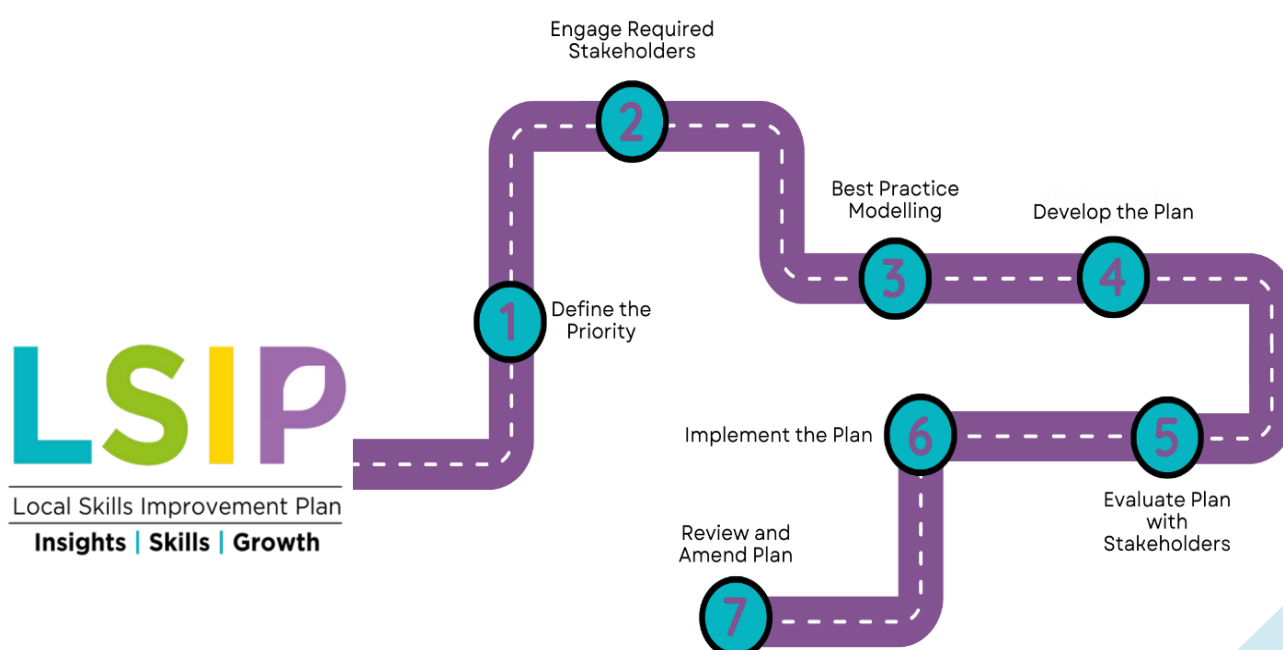
Employers: Norfolk & Suffolk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central part of the Working Groups and Common Framework Groups. • Engage in training to enhance the workforce development offer! • Provide ongoing and continual skills challenges and gaps. • Provide feedback and evidence base on LSIP/LSIF interventions have a positive impact on the business community.
ERB: Norfolk & Suffolk Chambers of Commerce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the project plan and lead the programme to completion. • Embed the message of the LSIP to Chamber Members and engage wider business community to promote the projects being delivered. • Ensure the working group and common framework group have direction and output, based on impact model, with employers and providers. • Broaden the scope of engagement utilising stakeholders employer groups. • Utilising the chambers existing employer focused programmes and projects. • Promote Training programmes through LSIF or other Funding Streams such as bootcamps. • Increase the access for SMEs to engage with projects and the skills system. • Reporting to DfE as per statutory guidance.
Provision: Further Education / Higher Education / Voluntary, Community, Faith & Social Enterprise / Local Authorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in collaboration to design and deliver consistent training solutions to employers under the same project. • Being active members of the working and common framework groups. • Sharing best practice so that projects have maximum impact to the business community. • Utilising existing funding streams to implement the requirements outlined in the LSIP. • Supporting current industry practices and themes such as the tutor shortage in key sectors. • Create active forums in which feasibility and provision plans can be developed and established.
Stakeholders: DWP / Growth Hub / District EDO's / Menta / NAAME / CITB / Tech East / BIDs / FSB / EEEGR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a link to LSIP activity through their networks. • Refer businesses to LSIP projects which will support skills needs. • Incorporate LSIP messaging into networking and steering groups. • Skills Hub partnership activity.

14. Roadmap for Change

The Norfolk and Suffolk LSIP will use the below model for implementing changes to the local skills system. This will be a model for all the solutions, which the Working Groups and Common Framework Group identify as important to the ongoing needs of workforce skills development across Norfolk and Suffolk. This will be an integral part of the work of Phase 2 of the project, as the LSIP seeks to deliver a long-term impact on local skills.

Close monitoring and consistent employer/provider feedback will be crucial to the success of the delivery of any new courses or new initiatives in response to the findings from the LSIP employer engagement activity.

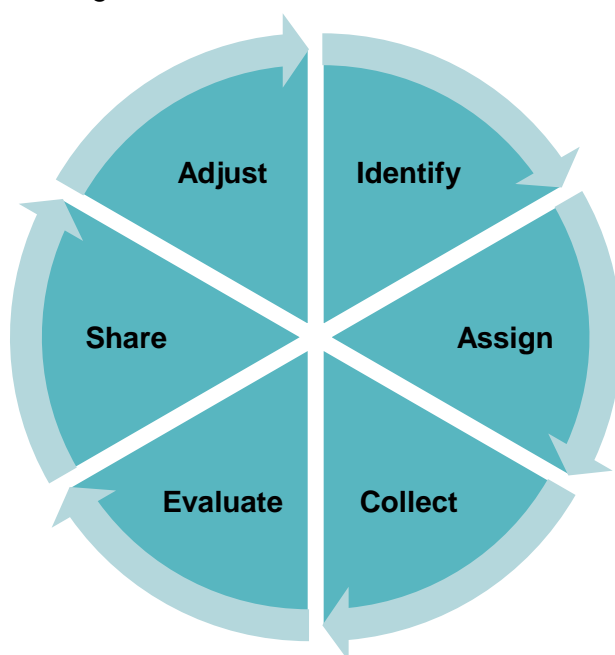
1. **Define:** The Priority will be decided by the findings and agreement of the Common Framework Group, with a clear project plan.
2. **Engagement:** LSIF lead, Local Skills Hub, Delivery Partners, Employer Representatives will be actively involved from the outset.
3. **Best Practice:** Previous schemes and projects will be considered to ensure we are building on existing best practice and existing funding streams.
4. **Development:** The plan will be crafted and developed in partnership with lead delivery organisations.
5. **Evaluation:** The plan to be evaluated by all stakeholders and amended if required.
6. **Delivery:** The plan will be carried out and implemented in partnership with stakeholders.
7. **Review:** From initiation through the lifecycle of the project the plan will be reviewed and assessed including the impact on the businesses.



15. Monitoring & Review

It is essential that the LSIP continuing into Phase 2 monitors and reviews its functions and remains relevant to the local skills system and adjusts to continue to deliver the objectives and outcomes required by the Department for Education, contributing to emerging Norfolk and Suffolk skills strategies.

1. **Define Goals:** The plan needs to ensure that these are clearly defined and have achievable milestones with measurable steps. This will allow easier tracking of progress towards meeting the overall aims, ensuring goals are put against a workable and realistic timescale.
2. **Assign Roles & Responsibilities:** Specific details of roles and responsibilities of individuals and organisations. This could include partner organisations who operate under MoU or key personnel or stakeholders who are integral to the success of the LSIP.
3. **Collect Data:** A constant flow of data is required to ensure that the changes which are to be delivered continue to be the priorities from business. Further employer engagement and re-engagement will be required with the Chamber networks playing a crucial role in this activity.
4. **Evaluate Results:** Using all the Data collected, create a clear and concise evaluation of the results align these with the goals of the LSIP and identify any areas of change or adjustment required to the plan.
5. **Communicate with stakeholders:** All findings and data should be shared openly with active stakeholders for comment, advice, and suggestion as to how the plan can be improved, changed or adjusted.
6. **Adjust Plan:** Using feedback and evaluation of the results, make reasonable adjustments to the plan and ensure that these again are measured and recorded change.



This differs from the roadmap as that will be a process for enabling change to the exact priorities.

This process below will be used to identify and analyse the success of the overall LSIP.