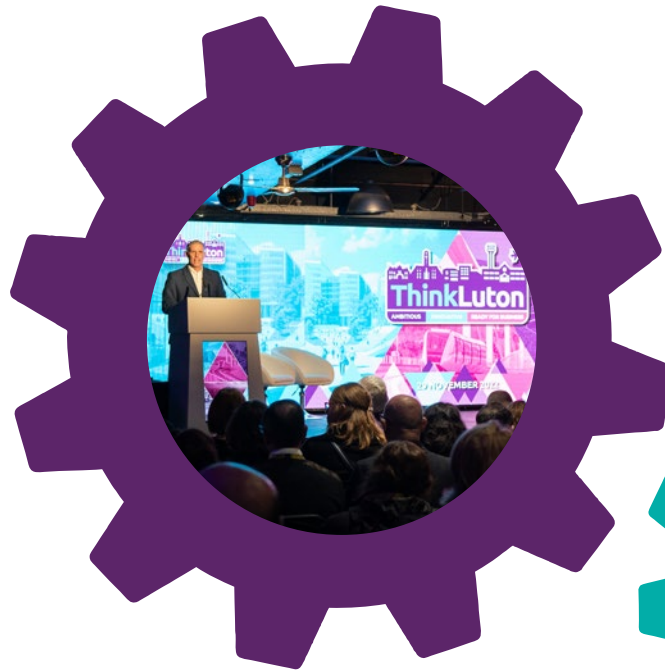


Luton 2040
A place to thrive

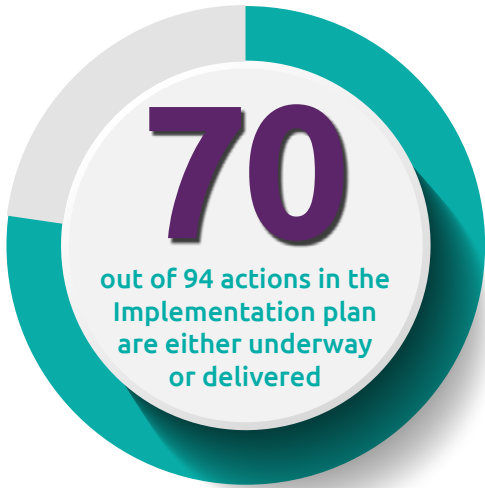


Luton Employment and Skills

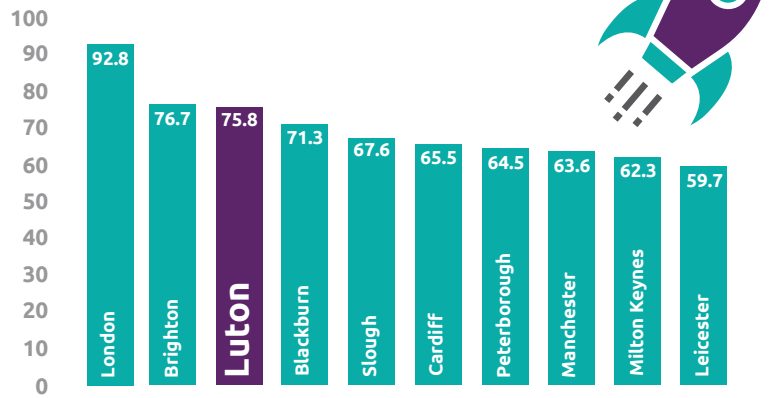
Unlock your potential



Annual Review
2022-2023



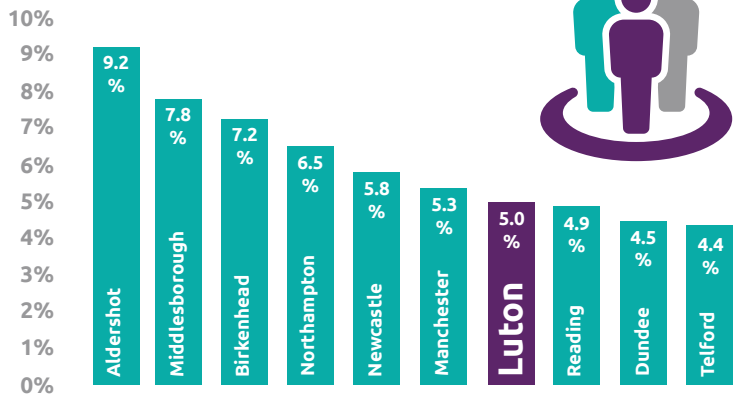
Luton had the 3rd highest rate of business start-ups in the country in 2021



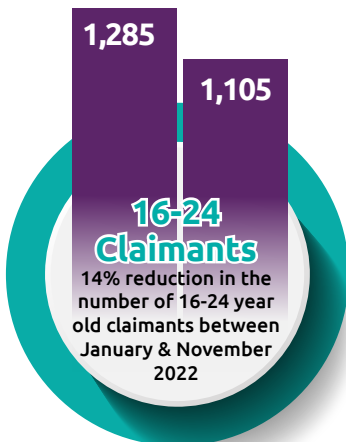
Business start-ups per 10,000 population



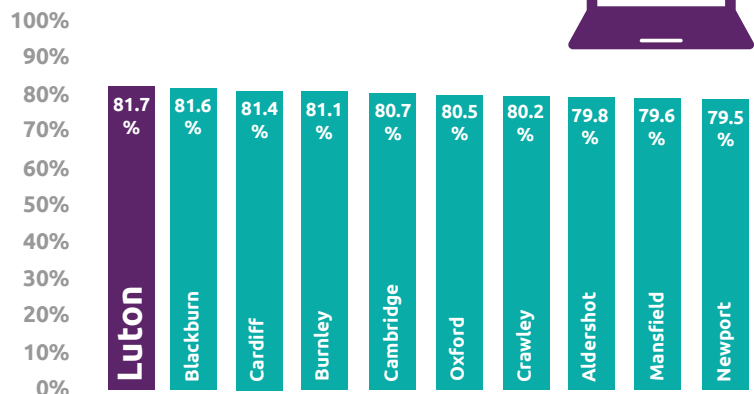
Luton had the 7th highest rise in private sector job growth in 2020/21



10 cities with the highest percentage rise in private sector jobs



Luton was number 1 for highest coverage of superfast broadband in 2022



Cities with the highest share of subscribers with 30Mbps+ speeds



Introduction

A Transformative Year for Employment and Skills in Luton



It is a real pleasure to look back on an incredibly fruitful last 12 months of delivery against our ambitions for employment and skills in Luton.

The Employment and Skills Strategy is vital to building a more inclusive economy where all our residents and businesses can thrive and realise our shared vision for Luton 2040. This strategy can only be delivered through partnership working across our town, led by the Employment and Skills Partnership Board. This review demonstrates the scale of outstanding achievements from many of our partners over the past year.

Together, we have delivered significant progress in developing our talent pipeline through increased access to further and higher education. This has included new programmes for STEM skills and entrepreneurship at the University of Bedfordshire as well as continued excellent progression to university and academic qualifications from Luton Sixth Form College and the Shared Learning Trust. As Principal of Barnfield College, I was also proud to open our new £30 million campus building, which has already provided more than 200 additional learner spaces in the past year.

We are seeing a truly exciting transformation for employment and skills in our town

Programmes such as Passport to Employment, Building Better Opportunities, Multiply and ESOL have continued to provide skills training and pathways into work and further training for hundreds of residents who were previously unemployed or economically inactive. In addition, Luton has secured more than £2 million from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Multiply to deliver skills programmes across the town.

Five businesses in Luton signed up to the Good Business Charter in the past year, which ensures that their employees will earn the Real Living Wage with fair employment terms, and many businesses across the town and the wider region, such as Luton Town Football Club and the Cornerstone Employer Group have launched new innovative skills projects in Luton.

These achievements, among many more in this review, are delivering across each of our four strategic priorities. I am delighted to say that 70 of the 94 actions in our Employment and Skills Strategy Implementation Plan are either underway or complete, with the remaining actions to begin this year.

We have delivered significant progress in developing our talent pipeline through increased access to further and higher education

While there is a lot more to do going forward, we are already seeing a real impact from our collective achievements, including 1,875 fewer residents unemployed, an increase in the number of people with level 2, 3 and 4 qualifications, a reduction in the number of registered NEETs and a significant fall in the number of businesses reporting skills gaps in their workforces.

We also know that Luton has many other great assets that will help fuel further growth and opportunities for our people and businesses in the future. This includes having the third highest rate of business start-ups in the country in 2021, the best broadband coverage in 2022 and the seventh highest rate of private sector jobs growth in 2021.

We are seeing a truly exciting transformation for employment and skills in our town as a result of real partnership work, and I believe this will benefit our town and its people for many years to come as we continue on our journey to Luton 2040.

Cath Gunn







Principal of Barnfield College
and Chair of Luton Employment
and Skills Partnership Board

Strategic Priority 1


Skills Driving Economic Recovery and Growth

Over the past twelve months, partners across Luton have continued to support the town's economic recovery through the actions they have been delivering from the Employment and Skills Implementation Plan. These actions have also been focussed on developing long-term growth across our key and emerging sectors through the development of eco-systems to drive the creation of good and well-paid jobs for Luton residents.

Major achievements of the past 12 months:

-  Luton Council, The Culture Trust Luton, Luton BID, EcoStyle and Ashbridge Estates all gained accreditation to the Good Business Charter in 2022, which includes commitments to fair pay and employment.
-  Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce and Luton Council worked closely to develop Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs), which will help to better identify businesses' current and future skills needs.
-  The University of Bedfordshire's Pathways to Recovery Entrepreneurs Masterclasses programme was successfully established, with a dedicated programme manager in place and 157 applicants in the programme's first six months.
-  Luton Rising submitted its Development Consent Order to further grow the capacity of London Luton Airport, working closely with York Aviation and Arup to outline a new Future Skills Strategy for the sector alongside this application.
-  Luton Council and Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce have worked closely on developing carbon calculators for businesses, which will be available through an online Generation Green Resource Hub.
-  Partners across Luton have been working to develop a new Community Wealth Building Investment Plan.



-  150 Luton businesses, sponsors and stakeholders attended the Think Luton event in November, while 2,645 stakeholders received the quarterly Think Luton e-newsletter, which provided business support, recruitment and skills training opportunities and links to grants and funding.

Success against our KPIs:



Hard-to-fill vacancies being identified and addressed through Local Skills Improvement Plans

24.5%
managers/professional



The proportion of Luton employees in higher-level occupations has increased, with 24.5% now in managerial or professional occupations



Job density in Luton increased from 0.77 in 2020 to 0.79 in 2021











GVA
95% 

Per Job Average Productivity (GVA)

Developing a Pipeline of Talented and Resilient People

There have been many major achievements over the past twelve months that will be crucial to establishing a strong pipeline of talent from our young people for many years. This includes significant investment in new facilities and commitments across a range of partners to more opportunities for further and higher education, as well as training, apprenticeships and work experience.

Major achievements of the past 12 months:

-  Barnfield College officially opened its new £30 million campus building in November. The new state-of-the-art facilities will help to deliver modern and flexible training solutions that meet the needs of employers, as well as develop new technologies and skills to support digital transformation across key sectors and green technologies and skills to support the transition to a net-zero economy.
-  Luton Sixth Form College students in 2022 achieved an overall pass rate for A-Levels of 97.3% and an impressive 51.1% of grades being A*- B.
-  Barnfield College has also been developing new and extensive employer partnerships across a broad range of employment sectors. These partnerships will deliver more on-the-job training opportunities for students and a recruitment pipeline directly from the college to local businesses. These partnerships also include personal development programmes to equip young people with the skills they need to become active and responsible citizens who contribute to our community.
-  Luton Council's 14-19 team continued to deliver the Careers Hub Luton with a new dedicated Enterprise Coordinator appointed to support 18 schools and colleges, including the new Windmill Hill School. The Careers Hub has helped schools across Luton to increase their average Gatsby Benchmark scores from 5.6 in summer 2021 to 6.8 in summer 2022 – 0.8% above their target.
-  Luton Council's 14-19 team also successfully increased employer engagement and commitment to supporting education through the Enterprise Advisor Network, which recruited seven additional Employment Ambassadors between September and January, bringing the total to 21. As a result, all Careers Hub schools in Luton are now matched to an Employment Ambassador.
-  Careers Hub Luton also commissioned YAS to deliver the Ahead of the Game initiative, resulting in over 440 interventions to support more than 150 young people at risk of NEET. 90.1% of those participating in these initiatives are now in education, employment or training as a result of these interventions.
-  Following the success of Careers Hub Luton, SEMLEP launched their own Careers Hub in February 2023.
-  The University of Bedfordshire introduced 'ladder apprenticeships' for Level 4 and Level 5, focusing on STEM, Business Management and Higher Technical Qualifications in Construction and Construction Management. New qualifications are also set to be offered from September 2023 in Digital Marketing and Construction Technology, complementing the University's existing programme of short courses, Higher Technical Qualifications, higher apprenticeships and degree courses.
-  The University of Bedfordshire restarted its on-site end-of-year demonstration days in Computer Science, Technology, Engineering and Design. These demonstration days are open to schools, members of the public and employers, often leading to employment opportunities for graduates.
-  The Shared Learning Trust established two successful partnerships with Luton Town Football Club and Northamptonshire County Cricket Club, creating 'give-back' local coaching opportunities that can lead to degrees and apprenticeships. The Luton Steelbacks Academy is a two-year, fully funded programme which combines university-recognised education and qualifications with a first-class cricketing experience. At the same time, the partnership with Luton Town Football Club provides a pathway for boys and girls to a Level 3 CTEC qualification.

⚙️ The Shared Learning Trust has continued to develop a pipeline of resilient and adaptable young people through post-16 academic and vocational Level 3 pathways. Chalk Hills Academy has also developed a new careers programme aligned to the Government’s White Paper and Gatsby Benchmarks.

⚙️ The Cornerstone Employer Group was successfully converted into the Legacy Programme Group in the last year, with a pilot project providing skills-based insight activity to over 100 young people, with a further 90 young people expected to be involved by Summer 2023.

⚙️ The University of Bedfordshire and Luton Council partnered on the STEPs into STEM programme, which gave 52 disadvantaged year 8 students from seven schools in Luton the chance to attend a STEM-based programme delivered over five sessions at the university and introduced them to a range of STEM careers.

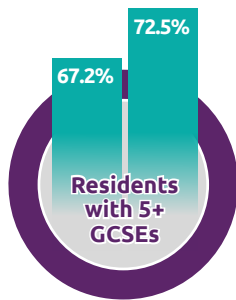
⚙️ Pupils of Woodlands School participated in a STEM employability day delivered by Luton Council and StemPoint.



⚙️ The Foundation for Reach Society and Luton Council successfully delivered the first-ever Luton Employability Day in June 2022. More than 125 young people aged 10 to 19 attended the event, alongside more than 35 employers and over 30 role models who provided first-hand practical advice and guidance on career opportunities, pathways and success, with some young people finding work experience and apprenticeship opportunities on the day.

⚙️ Luton Council launched a new digital work experience request form to enable year 10 and year 11 school pupils to apply for work experience placements in the council, with the local authority committing to taking between two and five work experience placements per directorate in 2023. The council is also progressing with plans for a Passport to Local Government programme, which will provide opportunities while addressing skills gaps and hard-to-fill vacancies.

Success against our KPIs:



Proportion of residents with 5 GCSEs and above increased from 67.2% to 72.5% in 2021



Proportion of residents with no formal qualifications fell from 10.9% to 9.8% in 2021



1030 new apprenticeship starts in 2021/22 an increase of 6% on the previous year



32% increase in year-on-year apprenticeship starts between August and October 2022



An increase of 200 learners at Barnfield College in 2022










98% of Luton Sixth Form students progressing to university, further education, employment or training

Strategic Priority 3

Tackling Long-Term Inequality and Economic Inactivity

Against this priority, there has been strong progress with several programmes and activities helping to support hundreds of the most disadvantaged residents and those furthest from the labour market into training and employment. In doing so, we are beginning to address long-standing inequalities to level up opportunities across our community.

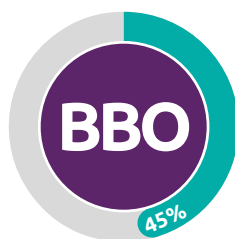
Major achievements of the past 12 months:

-  Luton Council secured £1.2 million of Multiply funding from the Department for Education to deliver maths to 369 residents aged 19 and above as part of the Council's Food First initiative, helping disadvantaged households to cope with the cost of living crisis.
-  The Luton Citizen's Fund 2021-22 supported 67 separate grassroots projects to improve mental health and wellbeing and to create opportunities for young people in Luton.
-  Luton Adult Learning acted as the lead accountable body for SEMLEP's £5.6 million Building Better Opportunities project, which supported over 1,000 Luton participants who were either unemployed or economically inactive to participate in skills programmes. 546 participants went into employment or further training by the end of the programme.
-  Luton Adult Learning supported 2,986 adult learners with employability training via programmes such as Passport to Employment and A Better Place to Start and essential qualifications such as ESOL, Functional Skills in maths & English and GCSEs.
-  Total Wellbeing, East London NHS Foundation Trust and Luton Adult Learning worked in partnership to deliver Mental Health First Aid training to 203 residents in the last year.
-  Luton Council, The Culture Trust, Luton, Luton BID, EcoStyle and Ashridge Estates all gained accreditation to the Good Business Charter in 2022, which helps to address inequality by guaranteeing a Real Living Wage to employees and requesting this through supply chains.
-  At the Luton Fairness Taskforce event in 2022, Luton Council and NOAH Enterprise led workshop discussions to gain increased awareness of the barriers to employment and training for residents in Luton.

Success against our KPIs:



21% decrease in claimant count figures from January to October 2022 – down from 9,145 to 7,270



45% of unemployed participants in the Building Better Opportunities programme gained subsequent employment or further training



67% of economically inactive participants in the Building Better Opportunities programme gained subsequent employment or further training



5 organisations within Luton gained Good Business Charter status, which guarantees employees are paid the Real Living Wage

NEET

2021: 2.7%
2022: 2.3%

The proportion of Luton residents not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) fell from 2.7% in 2021 to 2.3% in 2022

Strategic Priority 4

Creating an Adaptable, Upskilled Workforce

This priority has included actions and initiatives across partnerships to develop opportunities for lifelong learning to support career progression, business growth and resilience, including the introduction of more T-Level courses and more bespoke training solutions to meet the specific needs of businesses across Luton.

Major achievements of the past 12 months:

- £18,500 of Community Learning Funds have been invested to provide mentoring and 1-1 support for 30 care leavers in Luton, while the Passport to Employment programme has been open to all care leavers, with eight so far recruited to apprenticeship roles within Luton Council.
- The University of Bedfordshire held its first-ever Reskill to Rebuild event in October, with a focus on management roles. This was attended by 50 employers and resulted in eight new apprenticeship placements.
- Barnfield College developed new and extensive employer partnerships across a broad range of sectors, which has led to discussions with employers about the skills needs within their businesses. As a result, Barnfield has worked with employers to develop more responsive skills training solutions that contribute meaningfully to the success and growth of businesses. These partnerships have also led to new regional skills solutions that are helping to ensure employers receive viable and sustainable training for niche roles.
- Barnfield College has also introduced Extended Reality training solutions that are increasing the range and accessibility of training options to individuals and employers, helping to provide more bespoke training for specific employer environments and equipment at a low cost.
- During the Academic Year 2022-23, Bedford College had T-Level placements with 10 Luton-based employers and eight T-Level placements taken up by Luton students. These placements included the first-ever T-Level placement provided within Luton Council.
- Luton's Apprenticeship Brokerage Service was formally launched in November 2022 and has already received several requests for support.

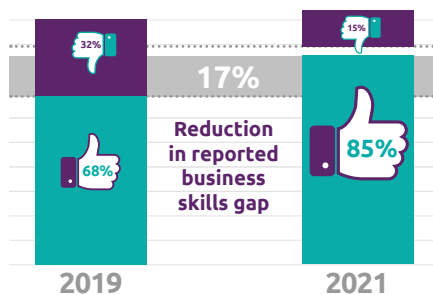
Luton

Apprenticeship Brokerage Service

The bespoke way to recruit and retain



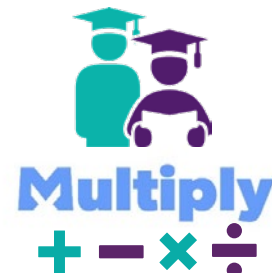
Success against our KPIs:



The proportion of Luton businesses that identified at least one skills shortage in their workforce fell from 32% in 2019 to 15% in 2021



3,377 Luton Adult Learning enrolments 2021/22 – an increase of 137 from the previous year



Over 200 learners accessed maths courses through the Multiply Programme between August and December 2022

Case Studies

Steps into STEM

In partnership with Careers Hub Luton through the Luton Council 14-19 team, 52 Year 8 students from various schools in Luton attended five Steps into STEM sessions at the University of Bedfordshire from 30 March to 14 July 2022. Students took part in eleven STEM sessions during the event across five different sessions. Sessions included workshops with our Forensic Science, Robotics and Computer Science departments. We also had external facilitators such as Starlight Planetarium, run a rocket workshop, and Ecostyle, who ran a workshop on renewable energy.

Students that took part in the Steps into STEM event were asked to complete a post-event questionnaire after each day to gauge the sessions' usefulness and survey the students' feelings about higher education. The student's responses to the five sessions of Steps into STEM were very positive, responding that they found the event beneficial for finding out about STEM and exploring many of the elements of higher education. At the end of the first session, 91% of students felt either very confident or confident in their understanding of STEM. The questionnaire also found a 15% increase in both the number of students interested in a future STEM career and the number of students interested in studying a STEM degree.

At the end of the fifth session, 94% of students either agreed or strongly agreed that they understood the benefits of going to university. In addition, 87% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they also understand the routes into higher education. This is very positive, as this data indicates that these sessions are having an influence on the student's outlook towards higher education which can help them meet their full potential.

Barnfield College

Construction students at Barnfield College were able to develop practical, industry-relevant skills during the building of the college's new £30 million campus. An online video case study can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/571687509/b4ca0e344f>



Stockwood Park Academy

Alongside Careers Hub Luton, Stockwood Park Academy's careers offer continues to evolve and differentiate according to the needs of their students. Highlights and achievements include:

- Careers sessions embedded into RSHCE curriculum
- All students in YRs 7-13 having careers assemblies from a variety of employees, employers, apprentices, apprentice providers, universities, colleges and independent training providers
- Established a Professional Working Group with Enterprise Adviser and other business colleagues.

STEMPOINT STEM Day: Woodlands Secondary School

Following an introduction by the Careers Hub Luton, Woodlands Secondary School organised a STEM day. Traditionally at Woodlands, employer interaction and STEM days have been reserved for Key Stage 5 students. However, the school's development plan now focuses on bringing those experiences to Key Stage 4 students to ensure that any student leaving the school at the end of KS4 has had the same opportunities as those who progress to Key Stage 5. STEMPOINT came into Woodlands to deliver an activity in collaboration with Tesco. Students enjoyed the experience, and closer links have been made with local employers.

A positive outcome of the day was that local employers became aware of Woodlands' students and were able to see what they are capable of doing.

The school has been able to build connections with local businesses, which could provide work experience opportunities. The Community Liaison at Tesco is also a good link, and the school is exploring the possibilities for students to visit stores, particularly behind the scenes, in places such as the bakery.

Students really enjoyed the day and were enthusiastic and engaged throughout. They were a little taken back at the beginning of the day, as they had not been prepared, but once they spent a bit of time with the visitors, they relaxed and enjoyed the slow build. Students who might not have normally stayed for the whole day's activities were engaged and participated all day.

Looking Ahead to the Next 12 Months

Over the next twelve months, we will continue to deliver on each of the actions from the Employment and Skills Strategy Implementation Plan that are underway, as well as commencing with the remaining 24 actions.

The Employment and Skills Partnership Board will also lead a review of the Strategy and Implementation Plan to bring these documents up to date in line with the refreshed Luton 2040 Vision. This will include aligning with other priorities for Luton 2040, including Marmot Town plans for reducing health inequalities, Luton's Roadmap to Net Zero, Luton's Fairness Strategy, and plans to become a Child Friendly Town. Some of the other remaining challenges and areas of focus for the next twelve months will include:

- Continued mapping of skills needs and collaborative skills planning through Local Skills Improvement Plans, led by Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce. Businesses and training providers will have the opportunity to scope out their current, and future skills needs as part of these plans.
- Support is to be provided to SMEs to enable them to gain accreditation to the Good Business Charter, enabling Luton to become the first Good Business Charter town.
- Schools and colleges and the University of Bedfordshire to create clear pathways informing young people of progression routes into Luton construction opportunities resulting from the Town Centre Master Plan and Net Zero Action Plan.
- Review of 14-19 progression pathways and continued development of employer links and engagement with education with a focus on addressing capacity challenges for employers.
- Development of a town-wide strategy for work experience, with a focus on enabling the most disadvantaged residents to access meaningful work experience opportunities.
- Supporting the development of the SEMLEP Careers Hub to ensure continuity of access to high-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance.
- Planning of skills programmes to be funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in 2024-2025.
- Luton council has formally launched a new £5m Skills Programme covering the delivery of:
 - A new Skills Commissioning team
 - The Apprentice Brokerage Scheme
 - Multiply & UKSPF skills programmes
 - A refresh of Adult Learning Programmes
 - Additional Passport to Employment programmes
 - An employment and skills hub at Morton House



Luton
Employment
and Skills
Unlock your potential



To find out more or be part of the Employment and Skills Strategy, please get in contact with Martin Stein, Programme Manager for Employment and Skills, or you can visit our website.

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Tel: 07599 234 144

Web: www.luton.gov.uk/luton2040



————— A huge thank you to all our partners —————



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