

# Let's get to work.

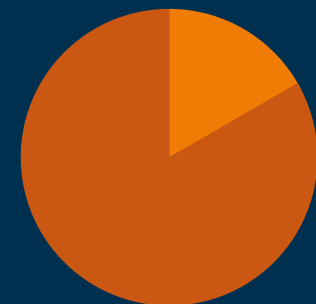
Supporting skills development together in partnership with local charities.



Norfolk  
Community  
Foundation

# Norfolk Skills Landscape

 Wages are lower than the rest of the region



Fewer than **1 in 5** people with learning difficulties are employed

Norfolk has a **service-based economy**



are Norfolk's biggest employers

The areas with the highest unemployment are:

**Norwich**

**Great Yarmouth**

**King's Lynn**

**7%**

of people in Norfolk have no formal qualifications

**5.5%** of young people are not in education, employment or training



**15,000** people claim unemployment benefits in Norfolk



Norwich is the second worst city in England for social mobility, and Yarmouth and King's Lynn also rank poorly

## Introduction

As the statistics on the page opposite imply, Norfolk has a relatively low-skill, low-wage economy. Our skills shortage limits our ability to grow our local economy.

As well as being CEO of the Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF), I have the privilege of chairing the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership's Skills Advisory Panel (SAP). With the United Kingdom preparing to 'level up', both organisations will be key in providing the instrumental local leadership and guidance required to get Norfolk to where it needs to be, especially where skills are concerned.

Local charities have been seen as 'a cheap way to get things done', but this reductive statement ignores the unique properties of Norfolk's voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations. It dismisses their creativity and ingenuity, trivialises their impact,

**“ I have often looked to Norfolk Community Foundation for ideas and assistance to provide additional, locally delivered support for people, who for a number of reasons, have found it difficult to engage with, or complete, mainstream employability & skills programmes.**

**- Julia Nix, Service Leader for the DWP in East Anglia**

and undervalues their community integration and resourcefulness. Their power to reach the most disaffected people makes local charities a powerful ally in addressing the skills shortage in Norfolk.

Norfolk Community Foundation is working with charity partners to find solutions to skills problems. Working with diverse and challenging audiences, these programmes are innovative, sensitive to individual needs and, most importantly, get results. We are delighted to share this work with you and are excited to see where we can go next.

**Claire Cullens, Chief Executive**





# Skills for Norfolk's Future

**New Anglia Skills Advisory Panel (SAP)** maps the skills needs for Norfolk's future against areas of expected economic growth.

**NEWANGLIA**  
Local Enterprise Partnership  
for Norfolk and Suffolk



**Agri-food** employs 7% of the workforce - double the national average. While the proportion of staff in elementary occupations is expected to fall, the proportion of skilled trades in this sector is expected to rise further.

**Clean energy** employs thousands in the East. Around 6,500 people will be employed by offshore wind alone by 2032, and at the peak of its construction, Sizewell C will employ over 24,000 people. This means construction and engineering skills require investment.

**ICT + Digital Creative** employs around 20,000 people, and is expected to grow by an additional 10,000 by 2024.



**Health and social care** is the fastest growing sector due to Norfolk's ageing population.



**Construction and business administration and support** are also expected to see reasonable growth in the region. Upskilling will be necessary to unlock higher salaries in these fields.

## Skilling up Norfolk

Local charities are perfectly positioned to support two of the key **SAP** objectives:

- **Equipping young people for success** - give them confidence and skills to make the most of future opportunities.
- **Tackling barriers to employment** - making the workplace more accessible for people who would ordinarily struggle.

Communities will be a critical partner in addressing skills shortages.

While statutory bodies in Norfolk will be able to move towards these goals, the most disaffected in our society may struggle to access this support. Those who are isolated, disabled, or not eligible for formal schemes can be left behind. Fortunately, we know that local charities and community organisations, sensitive to local needs, are able to reach and effectively engage people within their local area.

# Local charities: perfect partners

## Levelling up

The Levelling Up in the United Kingdom White Paper acknowledges the geographical inequalities in the UK. In Norfolk, local charities are a key partner in levelling inequalities equitably across communities in the region. Local charities, community enterprises and voluntary organisations are embedded in their communities, and possess three key qualities that get results:

## Agile

- Respond and adapt quickly to changing circumstances, making sure they have the right offer at the right time for the people they support.

## Trusted

- Create safe and familiar spaces for people to receive help.
- Staff and volunteers often recruited from the communities they are serving.

## Innovative

- Design activities from a range of perspectives.
- An open door approach that welcomes everyone regardless of complexity or time needed to support them.



## The Norfolk Community Foundation

Through the 2,000 charities, voluntary organisations and community interest companies we work with, our funding touches around 1 in 4 people across the county.

In 2021, NCF delivered over £4million in funding to more than 1000 highly diverse projects, ranging from getting young people online during the pandemic to building vulnerable women's confidence to re-enter the workplace.

Our close working relationships with local charities means we are best placed to deliver funding to ensure Norfolk 'levels up' effectively and equitably. Our robust monitoring and reporting procedures mean that we are already able to deliver insightful impact data upon project completion.



Open Road West Norfolk



# Equipping young people for success

Our young people deserve the best chance in life. To set them on the right path, we must:

- Improve children's speech, language and communication skills to give them the best possible chance at school.
- Improve attainment at every level in schools.
- Inform aspirations at an early age to give children a clear path of transition into further education or employment.
- Build young people's confidence.
- Prioritise the reduction of barriers to accessing learning.

This is a greater challenge for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. They are less likely to leave school with decent grades, and are more likely to miss school or to be excluded. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are also less likely to be successful.

Local charities excel at getting to hard-to-reach children - such as those who are not in mainstream education due to exclusion, physical or mental health, or SEND. Through alternative programmes, in schools or independent from them, these organisations can equip young people for success.



## NCF Pilot Action

Figures collated by the National Literacy Trust show that a high proportion of primary school children in Norwich and Thetford enter secondary school not being able to read as well as they should. Low levels of literacy undermine the UK's economic competitiveness, costing the taxpayer an estimated £2.5 billion every year.

### Charity Innovation

When we see a problem, we turn it on its head: literacy issues come from a lack of confidence and a lack of interest. To overcome this, NCF created The Literacy Project.

### Impact

Collaborating closely with local and national educational charities, Norfolk Community Foundation has been able to unlock funding to deliver a suite of tailored support to schools around literacy. We've also helped to connect schools with volunteers from local businesses, forming lasting partnerships to boost young people's confidence and motivate them to read.

### The Problem

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## Funded Work

**ST-EDS**  
Employability skills for young people



### The Problem

Over 5% of 16 and 17 year-olds in Norfolk are not in education, employment or training.

### The Innovation

Norwich-based charity **St Eds** (St Edmunds Society) provide NEET young people with trade-related qualifications, with the opportunity to move onto traineeships, apprenticeships or employment. St Eds' mantra of 'never give up on anybody' has seen them equipping some of the area's most vulnerable young people with the skills they need, including those permanently excluded from mainstream school, ex-offenders or those at risk of offending. Despite filling this gap in provision locally - they estimate their work reaches almost 1 in 3 of Norwich's NEET young people - they receive little statutory funding. Funding from charitable support bodies is essential. The Foundation has been a critical funding partner for over 8 years.

### Impact - Seb's Story

Seb joined St Ed's in September 2021 on a short course working on his self-confidence, teamwork and employability. Previously, his experience of education was not positive, as he struggled both socially and academically. This resulted in low self-esteem, further impacting his prospects. Since starting at St Ed's, Seb is now in a position where he is thriving socially with both peers and staff, and is engaging well on his Construction course, as well as in English and Maths lessons. He has also started participating in weekly Table Tennis clubs in his local village. The next step with Seb is to gain part-time employment to prepare him for eventually leaving St Ed's in a position where he is comfortable working within the construction industry. Tailored, understanding relationships deliver results.



# NCF brings partners together to invest in the future

DUDGEON  
Offshore Wind Farm



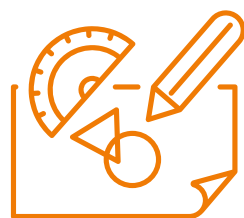
We are helping to connect clean energy providers with communities to take action to support skills acquisition now, for a brighter future.

Dudgeon, operated by Equinor, has been working with the Foundation for 7 years. More recently, however, they have focused their attention on inspiring young people to pursue careers in STEM, launching the Dudgeon Community Fund STEM Programme in 2018. It aims to increase motivation and competence within Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects for pupils aged 12-18.



**12,538**

young people  
benefited from  
the STEM projects



**£261k+**  
awarded to  
STEM projects

Areas of  
impact



## NCF Funded Work

disadvantaged backgrounds are also less likely to choose science either at sixth form or at degree stage.

### The Innovation



Over 120 students from 7 schools in Great Yarmouth, North Norfolk and Breckland have gained valuable skills and insights into engineering thanks to the Dudgeon Community Fund. The Greenpower Education Trust uses the thrill of motorsport to get young people engaged with science and engineering, challenging them to design, build and race electric vehicles. Alongside supplying car-building kits, the trust encourages schools to partner with local businesses, such as Lotus. This not only provides sponsorship and volunteer support to help young people learn engineering skills but also exposes young people to commercial activity in their area, building links for the future.

### The Impact

Young people are being inspired to take part in STEM activities. One teacher said: "The grant from the Dudgeon Community Fund has stimulated a surge of interest and take-up in F24 racing at schools across Norfolk. Typically between 15/20 students in each school are involved in the F24 project, with the race-day team often numbering 11 students, 3 of whom will drive during the race."

### Next Steps...

Girls are more likely to drop out of STEM courses than boys. A pilot study from The East of England Energy Group has shown that we can reverse this. They have received funding from the Dudgeon STEM fund to roll this programme out across schools in Norfolk, working with girls (and boys) at younger ages than usual to try to tackle this problem. All sessions will provide an introduction to the sector, before discussing local current and future career opportunities, and providing clear pathways into the sector.





# Tackling barriers to employment

Norfolk Community Foundation has been delivering programmes for **New Anglia LEP** since 2014, getting almost **2,000** of Norfolk's most disaffected people work-ready or into employment - at a cost of just over **£400 per head**. This approach is saving money, is better for the individual and improves our Norfolk communities.

It's easy to fall out of employment if you:

- Have poor physical or mental health.
- Are a victim/survivor of domestic abuse.
- Have had a prison sentence.
- Are homeless or are at risk of homelessness.
- Live with drug or alcohol dependency.
- Have low self-esteem.
- Live with a lifelong disability.

Local charities are adept at getting the most marginalised people closer to the workplace. By providing the stepping stones to employment, people can (and do) move on to meaningful employment.



### The Problem

Social enterprise **The Feed** has a mission to motivate change in people to prevent poverty, hunger and homelessness in Norwich. They discovered that many women felt unable to take part in their training programmes in the normal mixed-sex groups, as many female clients had been affected by male violence or abuse.

### The Innovation

To resolve this, The Feed accessed funds from the NCF Together for Women and Girls programme and was able to deliver a 3-month bespoke training programme tailored to women only.

### The Impact

From the 26 women that were enrolled, 7 moved into training, 7 moved into employment, 2 moved into job searching and 4 moved into volunteering. The Feed made referrals for 3 women to receive specialist counselling or wellbeing support following the discovery of previously undisclosed trauma.



### The Problem

Around 1 in 20 working-age people in Norfolk have no qualifications. Among ex-offenders, this figure reaches a staggering 1 in 2. This group often struggles to gain employment due not only to employer bias but because of a lack of skills, qualifications or experience.

### The Innovation

Based in Thetford, The Horticulture Industry Scheme CIC (THIS) provides garden maintenance and horticultural skills training, working primarily with ex-offenders and people experiencing homelessness. They received support from the LEP Community

Prize Challenge fund.

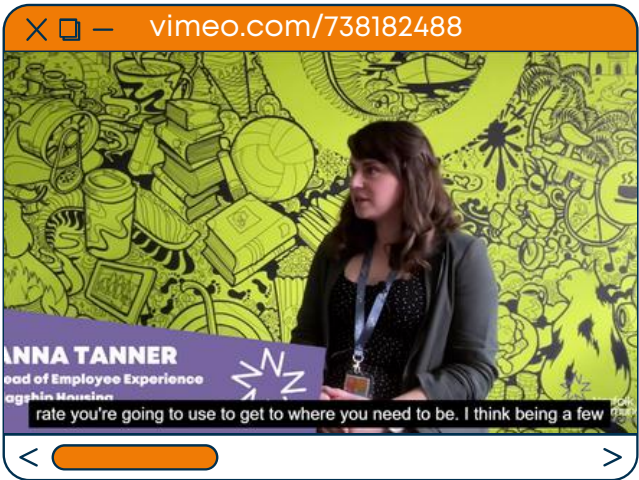
### The Impact

Nationally, only 17% of ex-offenders secure a job within one year of release. THIS, however, regularly sees over half the men and women who start on their courses gain employment within this period. Some of them continue working for THIS, while others move into employment in local factories or in construction.

THIS can connect their members with training and education opportunities, such as IPAF operator training (e.g. cherry pickers), as well as offer employability support and transferable life skills.



Working with local businesses such as Aviva, Warren Services and Flagship Housing, Norfolk Community Foundation has launched a series of videos to show applicants what Norfolk employers expect at interviews to help build confidence, support people and prepare them for job interviews.





# Good for one and good for everyone

3 communities in Great Yarmouth were supported to design and run shared open spaces thanks to the



Green Light Trust. The participants were trained in clearing, planting and wood crafting to regenerate an outdoor site for their own and community benefit. Many participants were long-term unemployed or were living with a long-term health condition, and benefitted from engaging in practical, meaningful work with nature.

## The Impact

Since their courses finished:

- 11 participants are volunteering in maintaining the sites independently, and are getting involved in activities and other volunteering opportunities at the community centres where the sites are based.
- 13 participants completed their John Muir Award, taking away a recognised environmental education certificate.
- Four participants moved into employment.
- 75% of participants reported improvements in their wellbeing from attending the sessions.
- 3 green space community sites were improved and are now available for the community to use and enjoy.

## JK's Story

"JK was referred to The Green Light Trust by his doctor to help his mental wellbeing during lockdown. He took part in a range of activities and showed a determination to do more. When the programme finished, he was encouraged to join an in-person programme; there happened to be a site the Green Light Trust was working on in the next street from his house.

JK suffers from respiratory COPD, meaning he becomes out of breath easily and struggles to do physical activity for any extended period of time, therefore attending a Social Blooms programme and carrying out physical tasks was a challenge for him. Despite this, he was keen to get involved to improve not only his mental wellbeing but to try and improve physically. By the end of the programme, JK had vastly improved the duration of time he could stay on practical tasks and was inspired to join other community groups/clubs to improve his wellbeing, including a local walking group. He is one of a group of people who continues to visit the site and carry out volunteer activities now that the project has ended."



## Community Impact

“Doctors and nurses from a local medical centre now take lunch breaks on the lawn next to the flowerbeds tended by participants because it had become such a nice area.

- The Green Light Trust





# The right help at the right time

Whether they need the confidence to take the first step towards employment or the chance to shoot for the stars, young people need support to achieve their career goals - especially if they are disadvantaged. Young people need to be able to access the right career pathways at the right time, and local charities are empowering young people to unleash their potential.



## The Problem

How do you build experience if you've never worked before?

## Charity Innovation

Norfolk Community Foundation supported the Prince's Trust's 'Get into...' programme, working with young people who are NEET to give them a taste of working in different sectors. They were able to explore employment options and gain valuable experience, with many entering employment:

- Get into Retail with Jarrold programme: 13 young people achieved their Level 2 Customer Service and Level 2 Conflict Management.
- Get into Retail with Marks & Spencer's programme: 15 young people received training in Digital Skills.
- Get into Insurance Services with Adrian Flux programme: 11 young people received training in stress management and workplace resilience, and gained practical experience by answering mock calls, shadowing call handlers and getting to grips with databases. 1 young person gained employment with Adrian Flux.

## The Impact

- 23 young people went into employment outcomes
- 1 become a regular volunteer
- 2 re-entered training/education settings.

Some of these who were unable to gain employment were paired up with a Prince's Trust volunteer mentor to work with them on a 1-to-1 basis.



## The Problem

Bright young people don't get the support they need to shoot for the stars.

## The Innovation

The **Arkwright Engineering Scholarships**, a highly esteemed scholarship programme, inspires hard-working 16-year-olds to pursue a future in engineering. For the past 30 years, the scholarships have supported STEM students through their A-levels, giving them access to a whole host of opportunities including financial support, personal mentoring and hands-on industry experience. Norfolk Community Foundation's JP Blanch Fund provides funding for several Arkwright Engineering Scholarships in Norfolk.

## The Impact - Connor's Story

Connor received a J P Blanch Arkwright Engineering Scholarship. Here is his story in his own words:

"Back in June 2018, I was lucky enough to a fully funded Arkwright Engineering Scholarship courtesy of The Norfolk Community Foundation & J P Blanch Fund. Over the following two years, my Arkwright Scholarship offered a myriad of opportunities and opened multiple doors with employers during my time at Sixth Form.

The funding of my scholarship provided by J P Blanch was invaluable for my learning and future progression into my current career at Jaguar Land Rover. It enabled me to complete a technically demanding Extended Project Qualification with both raw materials and tooling, support travel expenses and, most importantly, facilitate my attendance at my Jaguar Land Rover interview.

Looking back, the experiences my Arkwright Scholarship afforded me were second to none. The unique additions to my CV coupled with the financial support of the Scholarship undoubtedly played a key role in propelling me into my current position at Jaguar Land Rover."

Connor, Arkwright Scholarship Awardee





New U



Prince's Trust

Local charities play a key role in building skills, providing training and getting people ready for employment. They are able to offer innovative approaches and access people traditionally considered furthest from the workplace – those who did not achieve well at school, people with special educational needs, and those faced with significant life challenges. Working together with Norfolk charities gets results.

Clear impact.

Cost efficient.

Benefit to all is enormous.

**Join us to help them achieve more.**



About with Friends



NACA



Together, Norfolk shines brighter



[www.norfolkfoundation.com](http://www.norfolkfoundation.com)



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