

Bridport Investment Plan - Jobs, Skills and Technology

What are the challenge and opportunities identified through the consultation with Bridport businesses?

- Providing improved employment opportunities for young people in Bridport;
- A need to focus on skills development and business 'start ups' and incubation;
- Supporting skills development across the Bridport workforce;
- Supporting established businesses by actively driving digital / net zero transition;
- Lack of visibility of SMEs across Bridport – their contribution to the local economy and the opportunities for young people...
- Small, seasonal hospitality businesses – property development;
- Needs of established businesses to grow and adapt to a net zero future – 15 businesses still linked to the rope and net industry, artists community (including St Michaels), Bridmet, Hospitality industry, agriculture?? Care industry?
- Need to attract new businesses linked to a low carbon future – renewable energy hub/ nature recovery, re wilding, health and well being making most of the AONB designation?
- Bridport businesses face a challenge with changing consumer behaviour, outdated public realm, with 'unfinished' business from the original regeneration programme for St Michaels

Project ideas developed at the open session September 7th 2022:

Supporting existing Bridport business address economic crisis - low carbon energy, digital transition – linking new skill switch developing a new local enterprise

Hospitality industry needs help with net zero transition - Skills training;

Retro fit training + accreditation

Retrofit – adaptive re use...new construction skills and materials – need to actively push and support Foundry Lea Skills Academy could be a good starting point for connecting agriculture (natural materials) with new construction innovations.

Need for a focus on developing specialised skills for supporting the green revolution includes skills needed for retrofitting and reducing carbon emissions from ageing housing stocks; installing green technologies in homes; and repairing and maintaining electric vehicles.

Ambition is for Bridport to become a centre of skills excellence for these future jobs so our local workforce can help us meet our net zero carbon target and we can offer these skills both along the Dorset/ Devon coast and in the wider south west region. The skills sector we will develop will have local, regional and international significance and will futureproof our town with new training and work opportunities for our residents.

How to help more young people into the local workforce? – Big structural problems of poor transport and expensive accommodation.

Current system connecting Colfox School with local businesses for work placements and apprenticeships doesn't seem to be working well. Established engineering/ rope businesses interested in providing opportunities for young people but outreach / problems with the system are real barriers.

More attention and resources required for vocational training/ apprenticeships for 16-18 yrs. Is there a disconnect between local schools, colleges and Bridport businesses? A need for a meeting point – apprenticeships and skills hub. Supporting young people with employment and skills training, promoting and supporting local apprenticeships and Bridport based skills training for net zero transition. Training providers/ accreditation could be through Colleges/ universities that develop unique skills centred in Bridport.

Could there be **any organised mentoring programme** for young people where altruistic current and former leaders at large and small business could provide mentoring to young people, to help them get ready for the workplace and perhaps open doors to work experience opportunities available at organisations who are contacts of the mentors?

<p>To help prevent the loss of young people in the area develop a project to inform them of the opportunities available in local businesses that can provide training and a fulfilling career path.</p>	<p>Options for jobs that aren't all about hospitality. Don't want Bridport to just be a place for people to come and spend their final years.</p>
<p>A focus on renovation of both domestic and business properties, in order to reduce energy use and address the increasing cost of fuel. Development of localised, distributed energy generation. This can be linked to the work of Dorset Community Energy and Energy Local Bridport. Both these projects require resources for skills training and investment in technology.</p>	<p>Invest in skills and training for new entrants and agro-ecological food production aimed at the local markets. Drop-off, Processing and packing facilities for food aimed at local markets Invest in a community food hub, as a community meeting space, with healthy, local and affordable food.</p>
<p>The lack of proper apprenticeship opportunities in and around Bridport saddens me; a few miles up the road from here is a major high technology aerospace hub employing some 6000 people. Some attempt could be made to find a location to bring some of that technology and those skills to Bridport</p>	<p>I would like to see agricultural skills in regenerative farming and agroecology invested in rather than technology. The current intensive way of producing food has resulted in overdependence on expensive inputs and denaturing of the soil. Growing food in a local area is becoming of more paramount importance.</p>
<p>Digital, the world is flat as far as the internet is concerned. We have smart, switched on people in Bridport who can help the world. Computer programming, software are work from anywhere skills, why not Bridport.</p>	<p>I would also like to see the wealth of local artists utilised and supported to improve the aesthetics of the town centre. Many of our shops are dowdy and need repainting. We could become a centre of excellence</p>

	for art work on building exteriors which would go down well with tourists.
Development HUB for new technologies and linking in with local college's similar to Bedford College specialising in MMC training and work experience.	Low carbon building Local food processing Nature recovery and conservation
Independent retailers are great but they should not be the only future for Bridport. The kids of Bridport need to be ready for the global economy not one based on home improvement, retail or tourism.	There is a disconnect between education and the work environment which could be addressed through investment in careers advice and provision of business / networking events. Apprenticeships are available but finding out about them and how the funding works is difficult.