

Investing in Skills for the Future

Bridport Learning Hub

Investment Plan development project
Final Report August 2023



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Introduction

About this report

This report sets out a detailed proposition for a 'learning hub' in Bridport, whose aim is to encourage and enable people of all ages in the local area to find the training or education that's right for them. It also outlines a vision for a specialist college that could be developed for Bridport.

It represents the culmination of a six-month research and development project, building on the Bridport Investment Plan, adding actionable detail to the plan's ambitions around people, training and skills.

This document has several purposes:

- To communicate the idea to all interested parties,
- To set out the resources required as well as the expected return on investment for those who might support or fund the Hub,
- And to gather together in one place the detail required for those carrying forward the development of the hub.

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Project context

In August of 2022 Bridport Town Council published an [investment plan](#), outlining a set of ambitions and projects it is aiming to develop to improve the resilience of the local area. The plan highlights a number of known issues:

- the lack of locally accessible training/ further education,
- poor public transport options to access training further field,
- the low numbers of young adults living in Bridport and tendency for young people to move away,
- and the need to drive forward sustainability across all areas and sectors.

The aim of this project has been to develop an investable proposition that tackles some of these challenges by improving access to training and further education in Bridport, potentially themed around sustainable skills and technologies.

Key question: could Bridport have a 'College of Sustainable Technologies'?

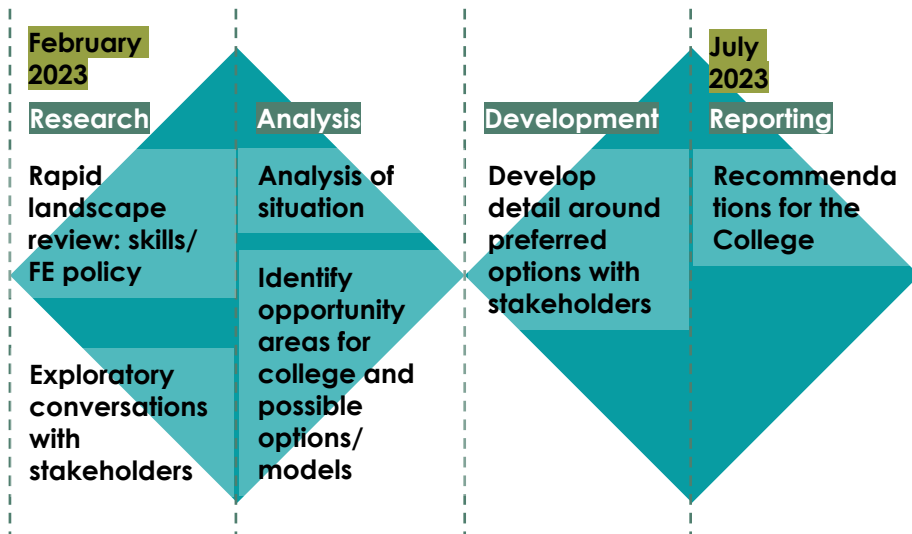


Bridport Town Council Investment Plan

Introduction

Approach to research

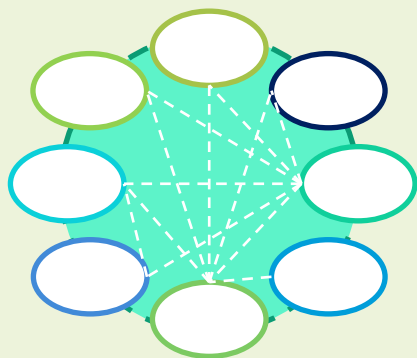
The development of the proposal has followed a design research methodology, consulting widely with stakeholders and iteratively developing ideas through conversations and workshops.



Throughout this process the idea has evolved from the original proposition ('Bridport College of Sustainable Technologies') into two distinct ideas...

Summary of propositions

Could Bridport have a 'College of Sustainable Technologies'?



1. Bridport Learning Hub

New connective infrastructure that joins up and enhances existing skills provision, making education and training more accessible to people in and around Bridport.



2. Bridport College of Regenerative Practice

A small specialist College that develops and teaches leading edge regenerative practice across domains that are critical to human and planetary flourishing, and places Dorset at the heart of that effort.

These ideas serve different purposes and can be pursued separately or in parallel. Our recommendation is that the Learning Hub be progressed first, for various reasons: it is a piece of missing infrastructure that, once in place, could help establish the specialist college; it aims to meet the community's learning needs inclusively; it responds directly to the targets set by Dorset Council around the Shared Prosperity Fund. The College idea represents a key aspiration of the Bridport Investment Plan, and requires further iteration and development over the coming months.

Idea 1: Bridport Learning Hub

The Idea: Bridport Learning Hub

What is it? A single point of contact for accessing training, education and apprenticeship opportunities in and around Bridport, including nearby Colleges.

The Hub will

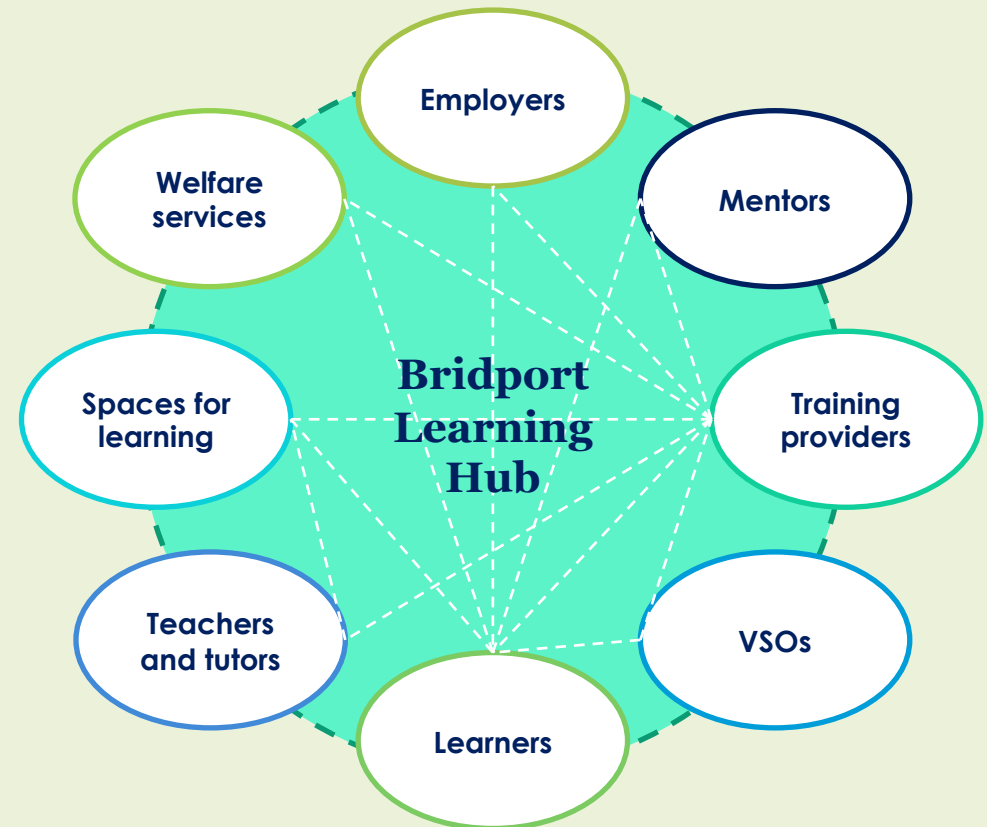
- bring together information from a range of existing providers, clearly communicating options
- act as a connector between employers, learners and training providers based in/ near Bridport
- bring provision to Bridport where possible
- actively support those disengaged from training and work to find their path

The Hub will be both digital and physical, with a network coordinator and a space in Bridport. The goal is to make it easier for anyone in Bridport to find the training that's right for them, and pursue it.

Why? The Hub aims to support the wellbeing of individuals and the overall resilience of the town, by:

- encouraging people to stay in Bridport by making the opportunities clear, and accessible
- helping employers find the right people to train and work with them

Connective infrastructure that joins up and enhances existing skills provision...



...making education and training more accessible to people in and around Bridport

Why this approach

Challenges for Bridport

We carried out research interviewing a range of businesses, young people, parents, training providers, and others with relevant expertise and experience.

Through this we identified a number of challenges to Bridport's resilience, generally, and skills and employment specifically. (More detail on the research data is included in Appendix 1.)

- There is a missing cohort of young adults, which has all sorts of problematic knock-on effects for the town, socially, culturally, and economically. Young people leave because they tend to perceive Bridport as 'boring', lacking in opportunity and activities designed for them.
- Because of its small size, Bridport lacks critical mass in terms of demand for courses, beyond either basic (numeracy, literacy) or generic training (e.g. general purpose business skills). While there may be one or two people who are interested in, for example, cyber security, there aren't often the numbers locally that would make running a dedicated course viable.
- Some young people are at risk of falling out of mainstream education, for various reasons, and looking for alternatives.
- Poor transport connections cause a number of issues: it's harder for learners and apprentices to get to college; it's time consuming for assessors to make visits to apprentices on site; small businesses in outlying areas struggle to recruit anyone who doesn't own a car.
- Staff shortages/ difficulty recruiting appears to be a widespread problem for many businesses – possibly linked to the relative lack of young adults
- There is a lack of available housing to buy or rent, especially for young people
- Below average wages (a problem for Dorset as a whole)
- Many people mentioned the challenge of finding out about opportunities, or what is going on locally, whether that's jobs, apprenticeships, training, events, and so on.
- There is significant poverty and deprivation: Bridport has two of the most deprived areas in the Dorset Council area.
- The ageing population represents a crisis for local creativity: the older generation have made Bridport what it is, but we now need the next generation to take up the baton of nurturing Bridport's creative and dynamic community.

Why this approach

Bridport's strengths and opportunities

- Even after years of austerity, a number of key public services and institutions in Bridport are still active and well-used, such as the Library, and the Youth Centre.
- Central government funding for skills and training also means that Dorset has plenty of adult community education, particularly around key skills (numeracy, literacy, etc), and EU funding has supported regional skills initiatives and business growth support (more of which could be drawn down to Bridport, however).
- There are three FE colleges nearby that cover all manner of different subjects and are willing to collaborate on innovative new delivery models.
- Overall, there is a picture of pockets of public service provision around skills and training hanging on, but without the connective tissue joining up all the dots to make the most of what's available, and to make it clear to any one person what they can access in/ from Bridport.
- Added to this, there is plenty of space of different kinds around the town that could be mobilised for training and education.
- There is a large and diverse pool of expertise/ knowledge in the semi-retired population, as well as support for dozens of volunteer organisations
- The local economy is surprisingly diverse, with a high proportion of adults qualified to degree level and a low proportion with no formal qualifications.
- Bridport offers a great quality of life in terms of access to blue and green space and cultural life, and some people who live here are choosing these things over the higher wages that might be earned elsewhere.

Why this approach

Policy context and priorities

- There is a degree of uncertainty in the FE policy landscape. T-Levels are being introduced but these aren't universally available yet, nor unequivocally welcomed by education providers. The FE landscape remains complex for the uninitiated to navigate.
- T-Levels will however require students to undertake two substantial industry placements with local employers, which the Hub would be well-placed to help facilitate.
- There is central government funding for a number of skills initiatives which can be delivered in Bridport (e.g. 'Skills Bootcamps', 'Multiply', see Appendix for further detail)
- Dorset's Local Skills Improvement Plan has prioritised sectors for attention in terms of skills gaps, as well as cross-cutting skills needs (digital, skills for Net Zero, work readiness, leadership and management), which the Hub would be well-placed to drive forward.
- Bridport Town Council's own Investment Plan and Climate Emergency Action Plan are taking a proactive approach to creating a more resilient place, creating a supportive environment for experiments towards sustainability.

Meeting Dorset's Shared Prosperity Fund targets

The [Shared Prosperity Fund](#) has been used in Dorset to fund the 'Green Skills Hub', a joint partnership initiative between Bournemouth & Poole College, Weymouth College and Skills & Learning Adult Community Education.

Going forward, the Bridport Learning Hub could help deliver several SPF targets:

- E2: Community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects
- E15: Investment and support for digital connectivity for local community facilities
- E24: Training hubs, business support offers, incubators
- E33: Employment support for economically inactive people
- E34: Courses including basic, life and career skills
- E37: Tailored support for the employed to access courses
- E39: Green skills courses
- E41: Local digital skills

Why this approach

The future landscape for skills

In order to develop viable proposals, the project embedded a 'futures' approach to the development of the ideas. A futures approach recognises the irreducible uncertainties in the contextual environment in which the Bridport Learning Hub and Bridport College of Regenerative Practice would exist, in order to inform their strategic direction. To realise this, the project team reviewed and synthesised over 15 existing reports on drivers of change and uncertainties that might have an impact on the two proposals, and organised a workshop held in Bridport in June 2023 to discuss them with around 15 local stakeholders.

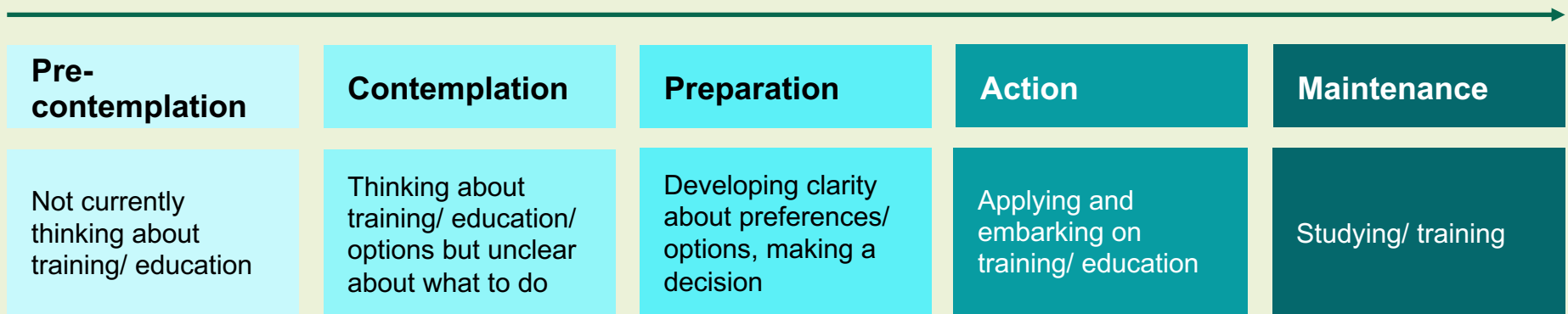
The future uncertainties synthesised from existing reports were:

- a changing skills base in the UK;
- the role of AI on the future of work;
- the purpose and organisation of higher education;
- the impact of climate and environmental change on work and public awareness;
- levels of societal change and speed of decarbonisation to meet UK climate commitments;
- shifts in mobilities;
- and the restructuring of places and services to better meet collective needs for equitable health and well-being.

These uncertainties have the potential to shape future public services, government, businesses, civil society, social behaviours, and the built environment. They therefore have implications for the future organisation, resourcing and delivery of skills-related services in Bridport.

Where the Hub will help

Where a learner is in relation to training, education and employment...



What the BLH aims to do...

Actively supporting those who need it to find their path, consider their options, build confidence to undertake further training/ education, and get into training or employment

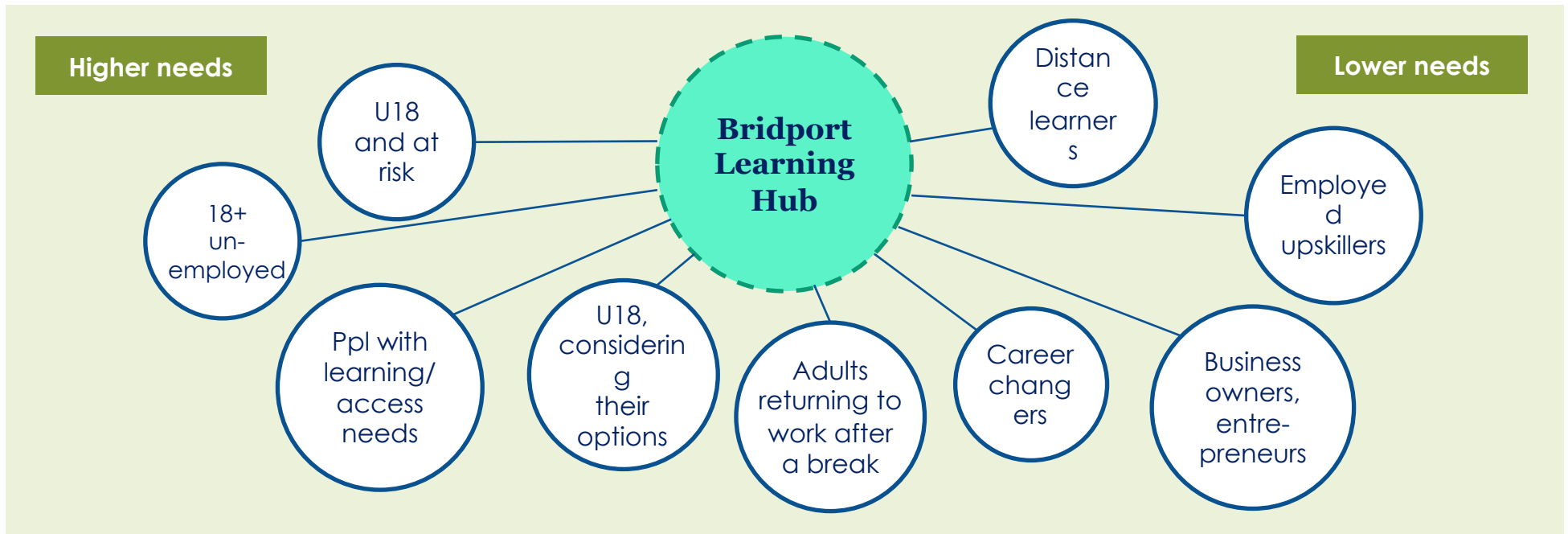
Communicating opportunities clearly so learners can find the right path for them, and to attract those who haven't previously considered options in Bridport.

Joining up provision to make it easier to access, bringing training to Bridport where possible. Supporting access/ removing barriers to education and employment.

Why this approach

Target audiences

The Hub aims to be inclusive in its approach to supporting the learning community, while recognising that different groups might require different types of support. Our assumption is that some people in Bridport (those with higher levels of social, cultural and economic capital) are more likely to find it straightforward to decide what they want to do and pursue that goal, whereas others will need more support. All, however, – as well as the town, its businesses and the wider environment - can benefit from having the opportunities in Bridport clearly communicated, and having training made available locally where possible.



BLH: activities and services in detail

Where a learner is in relation to training/ education...

Not currently thinking about training/ education

Thinking about training/ education/ options but unclear about what to do

Developing clarity about preferences/ options, making a decision

Applying and embarking on training/ education

Studying/ training

BLH activities and services...

1. Communications strategy

2. BYCC programme

3. Work experience programme

4. Mentoring

5. Pathways to Work with Skills & Learning

6. Themed careers fairs

7. Special Interest Groups/ curated content

8. Bridport Opportunities Board

9. Connecting up courses

10. Transport support/ access fund

11. Support for businesses

1. Communications strategy

Purpose

- To engage a broad range of learners and stakeholders with the hub
- To identify opportunities to improve provision in Bridport

Key activities

- Drop-in/ office hours/ regular presence at a physical location
- Regular meetings with key partners to discuss needs, identify opportunities, and make connections
- Website
- Social media presence
- Paper communications around town
- Visits to Bridport schools and other learner groups
- Outreach to those at greatest disadvantage

Six months of conversations with a multitude of people in and around Bridport have revealed there are many training and education opportunities that are not being realised to their full potential at present. For example, various employers have apprenticeship vacancies; Skills & Learning would like to deliver

more in Bridport but can't always find the right tutors, or identify if there is sufficient demand; numerous organisations have suitable classroom space available to hire; Discover Farming, the Arts Development Company and the Boat Building Academy have access to broad networks of mentors willing to give their time; and so on. However teasing this out has required someone talking to all the various stakeholders and spotting opportunities.

Similarly, helping people who don't quite know what they want to do, or even if they want to do training, will require something more active than simply putting information on a website (mostly it already is on someone's website somewhere).

Therefore the central activity in making the BLH work will be a person who acts as a connector and node in this network, communicating both formally and informally, and working out the appropriate approaches for each type of stakeholder.

1. Communications strategy

Learner types and channels to reach them

More research is required to ascertain the best routes to reaching and communicating with different groups of learners. The following table gives some preliminary suggestions/ indications.

Learner type	Channel/ signposting
Under 16s (prior to making choices about 16+) and their parents	Colfox, Woodroffe, BYCC, primary schools, clubs e.g. Bank of Dreams and Nightmares, the Lyric
16-18	Colleges, sixth forms, BYCC, Job Centre
Care leavers	Job Centre
People with different learning or access needs	ASCape, Citizens Advice, charities, Job Centre
Young families, parents returning to work	Bridport Library, Children's Centre, Medical Centre, Primary Schools, Leisure Centre, local news media, Job Centre
Business owners, entrepreneurs	Bridport Chamber of Commerce, Dorset Chamber, LSI, social media, Job Centre
Career changers, older learners	U3A, LSI, Library, local news media, Job Centre
18+ unemployed	Job Centre

2. BYCC programme

Purpose

- To connect with those young people at risk/ most likely to experience barriers accessing training and employment
- To engage them in thinking about training
- To demonstrate a range of opportunities in the local area

Key activities

- A programme of visits for the BYCC seniors club to different businesses/ organisations around Bridport

Some young people in Bridport will not struggle too much to find a path into further/ higher education and work: they are supported by parents/ adults who know how to navigate the system, and are embedded in institutions that structure their lives to keep them on track. However some of Bridport's young people do not have these benefits: they may be currently disengaged from or disenchanted with education, they may even have had negative experiences of institutions (including the judicial system), they may have difficulties in their life/

backgrounds which make them vulnerable, and limited opportunities to develop a sense of their own interests and strengths. They may also not be aware of the different pathways, possibilities and opportunities available to them. In other words, those perhaps most in need of help from the Hub might also be the hardest for it to reach.

BYCC already do great work with a large number of children and young people who fall into this group. With additional support they could do more. Initial conversations with BYCC to explore what might be done to help their club members find their path highlighted that something experiential (rather than, for example, a careers fair) would work best. With funding for additional staff support and transport, and help coordinating with businesses, the youth club could take its seniors group on a series of visits to different types of organisations/ businesses/ employers around Bridport, where they would hear from people that work there, and see first hand what goes on behind the scenes. This could be complemented with a follow up conversation with an appropriate mentor (see p. xx).

3. Work experience programme

Purpose

- To help ensure young people can find the right work experience for them
- To open up work experience to a broader range of learners

Key activities

- Coordination with businesses to create a long list of work experience placements
- Facilitate simple application process to match suitable candidates to placements

Most young people have the opportunity to undertake work experience at some point during their schooling, and local schools work hard to ensure their pupils can take advantage of this. Employers that we spoke to, however, suggested that while they are keen to offer work experience, sometimes feel that the young person who arrives is not a great match for their workplace. It also seems a shame that work experience should only be offered to young people: people of all ages (especially those thinking about

a career change) might benefit from the learning and connections that could come from experiencing a week in the life of a Bridport business.

The idea here is not to replace or duplicate what schools already do, but to enhance and extend it (and hopefully make it a bit easier) by:

- Ensuring there is an up-to-date list of Bridport workplaces willing to host someone
- Talking to workplaces and encouraging them to sign up, as well as ensuring workplaces have sufficient advance notice of placement opportunities to devise a meaningful experience
- Facilitating a simple application process for those workplaces that would like this (NB this could also enhance the learning experience by mirroring the real life process of applying for a job)
- Communications targeting other learner groups/types to encourage them to think about work experience as an option (although perhaps at a different time of year to the Year 10 work experience week).

4. Mentoring/ supportive conversations

Purpose

- To help people in Bridport who would like a mentor to find one
- To help learners find their path

Key activities

- Coordination with other organisations who have mentor lists/ pools
- Communications highlighting mentoring options
- Manage a list of local mentors and experts (if not already on a pre-existing list)

While some people may have a clear idea of what they want to be or to do, and how to get there, others may need more active support to:

- Understand what different jobs/ careers are really like
- Reflect on their own interests, passions, motivations
- Figure out what the route is to achieving their ambitions/ goals

To enable this, the Hub could help connect people with an appropriate mentor for a supportive

conversation – which might be a one-off, or an ongoing relationship.

A number of organisations already have access to a network of experts/ people who are willing to give their time in a mentoring role: Discover Farming, The Arts Development Company, and the Boat Building Academy have all indicated their willingness to connect their networks into the Hub. There is also an organisation called Dorset Business Mentors (yet to be consulted) which looks like it could also be usefully connected in.

The Hub's role here would be to direct people toward the relevant network to then find a mentor with/ through that organisation. In the case that these organisations don't cover all topics and interests, it would also be valuable for the Hub to build up its own list of mentors/ experts who are happy to be matched up with mentees.

5. 'Pathways to Work' with Skills & Learning ACE

Purpose

- To support learners over the age of 18 to think about what they would like to do and find the appropriate training/ pathway
- To demonstrate the broad range of sectors and opportunities that exist locally

Key activities

- Coordination with AS&L to tailor the 'Pathways to Work' programme to be Bridport-specific
- Support with identifying speakers and classroom space (and tutors if needed)
- Support recruiting/ directing learners to the course

Various courses exist which are designed to support adults who need some help finding their way into work, either because long-term unemployed or experiencing other barriers to work (including age). Skills and Learning Adult Community Education provide a range of continuing/ adult education across Dorset, including 'Pathways', for Jobcentre Plus customers, that focuses on understanding and

overcoming barriers, transferable employability skills (including self-employment), understanding the local job market. The course takes place in person, one afternoon a week for 7 weeks, and thus represents an intensive form of support/ coaching.

If delivered in Bridport, the course curriculum could be tailored with locally-specific material, including a range of guest speakers representing a diverse mix of careers and businesses. This would not only demonstrate the range of things it is possible to do for work in Bridport, but also help learners build and extend their social networks locally.

NB The inspiration for this element of the proposal comes from interviewee Phil George's experience of the success of 'Fresh Start' (see Appendix for more details).

6. Bridport Careers Fair

Purpose

- To act as an annual point of contact between Bridport employers and people looking for work
- To encourage local people (especially young people) to consider opportunities in Bridport
- To support local business resilience by addressing the recruitment challenge

Key activities

- Event planning/ coordination, with sector leads
- Broadly targeted marketing comms to ensure diverse participation

Part of the challenge with finding work locally is that the opportunities are not always clear or communicated very publicly – people find things by word of mouth or through social networks. At the same time, many businesses say recruitment is a critical challenge for the sustainability of their organisation. Careers-focused events would bring employers and people looking for work or training together, physically, enabling connections to be made. Businesses/ organisations should be encouraged to attend and share what they do: what their work involves and how to get into that kind of career, as well as any training or employment opportunities they have.

Bridport has a strong reputation for cultural events and festivals, and therefore a wealth of expertise in how to do this well. Careers events need to be exciting and engaging in order to fulfil their purpose. Themed fairs (for example farming/ agriculture, craft/ manufacturing/ construction, arts and culture, health and care, education etc) could occupy different spaces around town, with a clear directory for navigating the event. A central location could also run a programme of talks/ workshops highlighting Bridport's strengths and success stories, with food, drink and music to enliven the atmosphere. Exact timing and frequency, as well as other design decisions, should be determined on the basis of some light touch research with different stakeholders. An alternative model would be to build a careers element into existing festivals and events throughout the year.

Events management is potentially time-consuming and laborious, and planning a major event could easily monopolise the Hub coordinator's time. For that reason, it is suggested that the Hub work with identified sector leads, providing some funding to take on the task of curating and managing the programme and participation in their themed areas.

7. Special Interest Groups

Purpose

- To support the growth of priority sectors for Bridport
- To communicate opportunities, advice and guidance relevant to those sectors

Key activities

- Curate themed areas in careers fair (see p. 19)
- Create engaging content for web/ social media e.g. short videos of people talking about their work/ expertise
- Develop sector-specific skills plans for Bridport, including feeding into plans for specialist college if appropriate

The Hub could act as a platform highlighting specific sectors as particular strengths and/or growth areas for Bridport, for example: sustainable construction, food and farming, arts and culture. This would involve convening a small number of 'Special Interest Groups', consisting of stakeholders from those sectors, that would then carry out whatever skills-related initiatives they deem appropriate. Suggestions include curating an area of the careers fair, creating

content that communicates to prospective recruits/ learners/ trainees what a particular career is all about (which could be shared via Hub communications channels), and developing more detailed sector-specific skills plans. Special Interest Groups would also be a conduit for communicating/ collaborating with employers in relation to other Hub activities such as the Work Experience Programme, the BYCC Programme and finding speakers for the Pathways course.

Support from the Hub would include providing light touch support for meetings and facilitating any plans or actions that emerge from the groups.

8. Bridport Opportunities Board

Purpose

- To surface and share current training and work opportunities in and around Bridport
- To help businesses recruit
- To help people find work locally

Key activities

- A simple website where anyone can post a training or employment opportunity in Bridport or the surrounding area

This is another bit of relatively simple connective infrastructure: a single place where anyone looking for work or apprenticeships in Bridport can go to see what current opportunities are out there. At present this information is spread across multiple sources – recruitment agencies, websites like Indeed, social media, local news, etc - that mostly aren't Bridport-specific. Some things never make it onto public platforms like this at all: we heard from a number of businesses who have recruited apprentices via word of mouth/ social networks. Partly this may also be

because employers have to commit to partnering with a specific College in order to advertise for an apprenticeship via colleges: a decision that is perhaps more relevant for the apprentice than the employer, and may put some potential recruits off.

This will only be a success if sufficient numbers make use of it, so the site itself would need to be accompanied by some active marketing driving users towards it. The site itself ought to be quite simple so that anyone can write/ post their own opportunities (with guidelines). This could potentially generate a small amount of revenue if a nominal amount were charged per post.

9. Connecting up courses

Purpose

- To identify opportunities to deliver training in Bridport, reducing the need for travel
- To identify demand for new courses/ training types

Key activities

- Regular discussions with training providers to identify opportunities to deliver elements of existing provision in Bridport
- Monitoring local interests/ demand for training to feed back to providers
- Smoothing the process of running training in Bridport e.g. helping to find appropriate spaces, supporting providers to recruit learners

There is potentially more value that can be wrought from the existing system by simply connecting up a few things. For example, Skills & Learning ACE are able to introduce new courses if the demand is there (8 people), which the Hub could help identify. There are also plenty of skilled/ expert people locally who could become tutors, but wouldn't necessarily know about this as an opportunity.

In the case of Colleges, although for many courses/ types of training it is necessary for students to travel to the institution (for example to use specialist equipment and facilities), and although most of the time it won't be economical for Colleges to spread their provision across multiple sites, there are cases where College courses (or parts of courses) could be delivered in Bridport. Nearby Colleges are open to bringing the tutor to Bridport where significant numbers of learners from Bridport would otherwise be travelling to College, and to exploring hybrid delivery models where parts of the course can be done remotely.

Finally, there is also the potential for the Hub to identify groups of distance learners who might want to come together to undertake some training rather than doing it alone, for the added value of being part of a learning community.

10. Accessing training support

Purpose

- To enable Bridport learners to undertake training by addressing some barriers around transport and cost

Key activities

- Gather together all relevant information about College travel support options
- Run or adopt a simple ride-sharing platform
- Fundraise for – and administer – a Bursary Fund for people experiencing financial or resource-related barriers to accessing training

Travel and transport is a significant issue for learners in Bridport wanting to undertake training. Most training takes place elsewhere, it's very difficult to get around West Dorset without a car, and cars are expensive to run. Young people in particular struggle with getting to College if they don't have a car or can't afford fuel. In response, Colleges have responded to this issue by running a bus to and from Bridport. This is helpful, but there are still some issues: the cost of getting the bus every day can add up to be more

than some can afford; there is one bus to and from College a day, and if you miss the bus you're stuck; it also might not be a great use of time to spend all day somewhere for the sake of an hour-long class. All of these things are significant deterrents: hence the efforts to find ways of delivering training in Bridport when possible (see p. 22).

The Hub can respond to some of these barriers. First, by gathering together and communicating clearly what is available already in terms of transport. Second, by testing a simple a ride-sharing platform/ service – either creating one or promoting the use of an existing platform focussed around West Dorset – to alleviate the cost and increase flexibility of travel. Third, by fundraising for a Bursary Fund that Bridport learners can apply to for financial support.

11. Support for businesses

Purpose

- To support people in Bridport to start and grow a new business
- To support entrepreneurs and business owners to improve an existing business in whatever way is appropriate (e.g. improving sustainability of operations, growing/ scaling, improving efficiency, etc)

Key activities

- Access training, events and advice from Dorset Growth Hub
- Bring together peer group cohorts of businesses at an early stage of development
- Establish regular communications and meet-ups
- Identify and procure relevant additional training
- Provide co-working space
- Connect to relevant mentor networks

Bridport has a large creative community: many people move here because it supports a creative lifestyle, and so the town has a large number of freelancers, sole traders, and micro-small businesses.

This is an important community to target with support, in terms of the town's economic and social resilience. Publicly-funded organisations across Dorset (e.g. Dorset Growth Hub, Dorset Business Mentors) already provide free support for businesses including training, access to networks, business advice, mentoring, and so on. However engagement and take-up in Bridport has been less than in other places.

A Bridport-specific programme of business support, delivered through/ with the Learning Hub, could draw down some of these resources to Bridport, establish supportive local peer groups within the community, provide a physical home for start-ups if they need it (the LSI might provide a suitable space for co-working and meet-ups), and act as a conduit for future business support services funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund.

Delivery model

Central Hub infrastructure

In order to deliver these various activities and services, it is envisaged that the Learning Hub would require the following infrastructure, as a minimum:

- A **Hub coordinator/s**, based in Bridport, working part time (3-4 days per week)*
- A **physical space**, or spaces, where the coordinator and information about the Hub can be found regularly. The exact form and location of this requires further testing to find out what works for the widest number of stakeholders (e.g. it would be counterproductive to site the Hub somewhere that some kinds of learner wouldn't go)
- A simple **website**
- **Back office** support/ functions (for this reason it may be easier for the Hub to piggyback on an existing organisation)
- **Evaluation** support, in order to learn from the pilot and iterate the model

Networked delivery model

All of the above activities require the cooperation of a range of stakeholders, and many activities will draw down on funding or support from other places (e.g. courses for which specific government funds are available), effectively pooling resources in order to derive greater value from what is already out there.

However some are envisaged as funded packages of work for which a certain amount of Hub resource would need to be ringfenced. These include:

- Funding for the BYCC to deliver the programme of visits
- Special Interest Groups, particularly in relation to the Careers Fair
- And possibly the delivery of the Careers Fair itself
- Subsidised co-working space for the Incubator

* Hub coordination comprises a mix of task types: getting to know the local training landscape so as to be able to provide advice, liaising with the key delivery partners to organise and curate offers for Bridport, and interfacing directly with learners and providing advice. These may be done by one person or split across more than one role.

Delivery partners for the Bridport Learning Hub

The organisations listed on the following page are among those whose involvement will be critical in the successful delivery of the Hub, because they offer one (sometimes several) of the following:

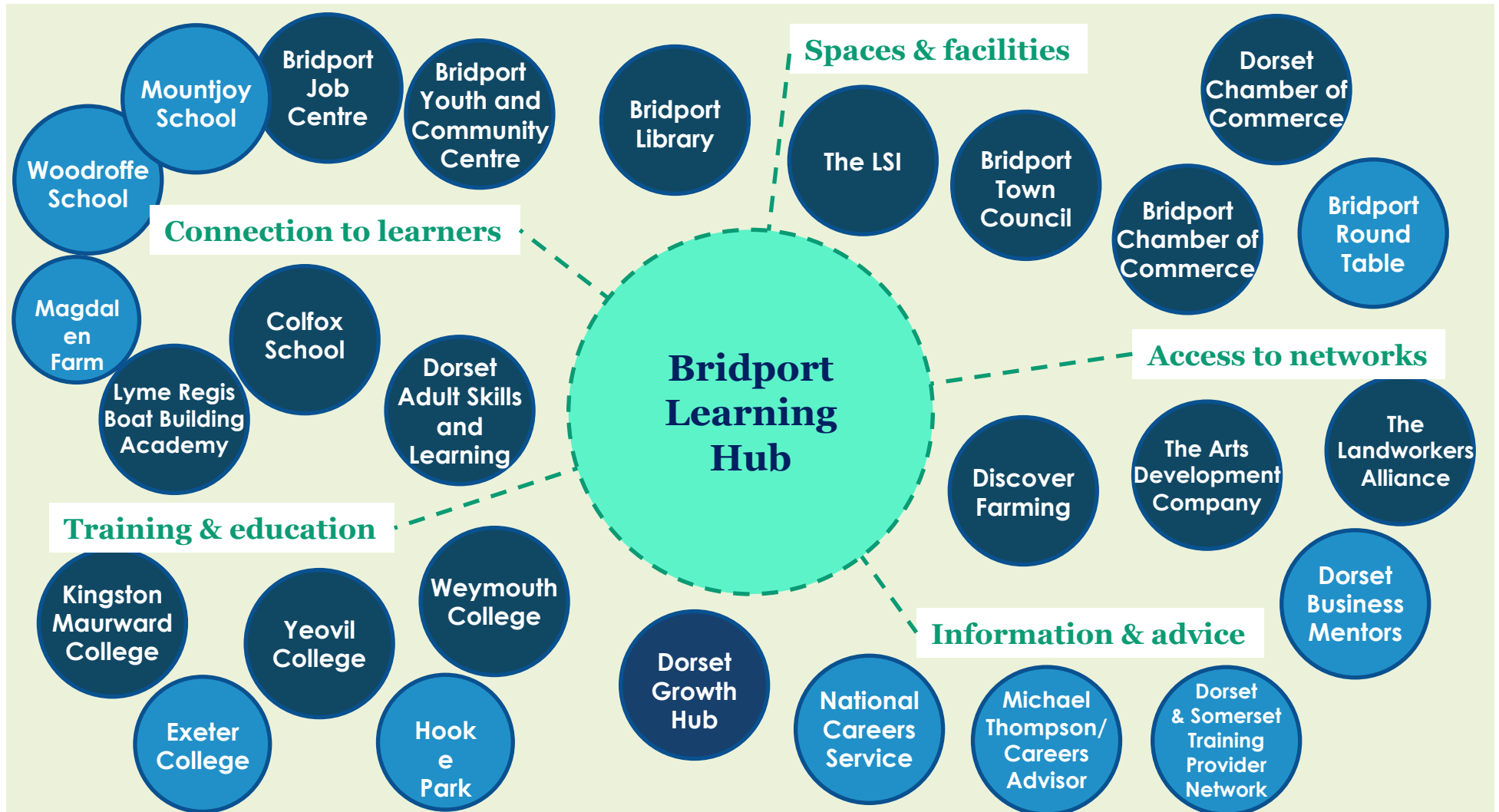
- Connection to learners
- Access to spaces
- Access to their networks (e.g. of businesses)
- Advice and information
- And of course, training and education provision itself.

Many of these organisations have agreed in principle to collaborate with the Hub: further detail on the nature of the collaboration/ relationship is included in the Appendix to this report.

It should be noted this is not an exhaustive list: additional delivery partners may emerge over time. Notable omissions (for reasons of space) include individual local businesses/ employers who have expressed interest in the Hub; however their active

engagement with the Hub will indeed be key to its success. Likewise, there are other organisations who have expressed support for the initiative who may well be useful allies without necessarily being directly involved in delivery.

Delivery partners for the Bridport Learning Hub



● Met with as part of development project. ● Yet to meet with.

Costs

Total funds required

For two a 2-year pilot, costs are estimated as per table to right, totalling £70,000 plus the costs of employing a coordinator for 3-4 days per week for 2 years.

Item/ activity	Funds required	Provided in-kind
Central Hub infrastructure		
Hub coordinator/s	Yes – salary pegged to host organisation	
Physical space		Yes
Website	Yes – c. £10-20,000 (NB also has potential to generate income through the Opportunities Board)	
Communications	Yes – c.£20,000 communications expenses	Yes – also via partners see below
Back office support/ functions		Yes
Evaluation	Yes – c. £20,000 or 10% of overall project budget	
Access bursary fund	Yes – potentially through community fundraising rather than core funding	
Networked delivery model		
Training/ courses		Yes
Work experience		Yes
Mentoring		Yes
Business support		Yes
Careers/ training events e.g. activities 2, 6 & 7	Yes – 20 events at c. £500 per event	

Next steps

As of the end of July 2023, this phase of development work is complete. The next steps over the summer/ autumn will be to:

- Establish a consortium to apply for funding, and act as a steering group for the Hub to guide its further development
- Seek funding to pilot the Hub as outlined here
- Appoint a coordinator to carry plans forward
- Continue conversations with delivery partners and stakeholders
- Prototype the Hub and activities for a period of 1-2 years
- Monitor, evaluate, iterate

Idea 2: Bridport College of Regenerative Practice

The Idea: Bridport College of Regenerative Practice

What is it? A small specialist learning institution that develops and teaches leading-edge regenerative practice across domains that are critical to human and planetary flourishing.

Doing things – farming, building, making – in a regenerative manner means to do so in a way which does not deplete one's original stock of resources, but instead adds to and improves it. As such, regenerative practice goes beyond 'sustainability' (sustaining what is) towards repair and restoration.

The College would offer a mix of residential courses each taking learners on a deep-dive into a particular area of practice. Delivery would be 'in the field', distributed in locations and facilities across the town as appropriate to the subject matter.

Why? An institution that attracts learners from elsewhere would be economically beneficial for the town, bringing in young people, as well as developing skills that both the local community and the wider world desperately need.

Bridport has a long history of creativity and non-conformism, as well as existing expertise and early stage experiments in some areas of regenerative practice: it therefore represents a promising crucible for the rapid development of leading edge practice.

Developing and teaching leading-edge regenerative practice for...



...Economics & business

...Arts & culture

...Health and care

...Clothing & textiles

...Shelter & construction

...Food & farming

...Energy

...Land & place

To improve the resilience of the community, and share
Bridport's creativity with the world.

Why this approach

A college tailored to Bridport

Through our research, conversations with experts in FE quickly revealed that Bridport could not easily support a large, broad-based college because of its small size (and in any case there are already several nearby). However a small, specialist institution that draws in people from outside would potentially be viable for Bridport, and represents an exciting proposition for the town. There are plenty of examples of similar initiatives in equally slightly remote places (see following slides), providing evidence that this could in theory work. Such an institution would be beneficial for the town in numerous ways:

- By bringing money into the town, providing training and jobs for local people (as tutors), and business for other organisations in the form of money that students would spend during their time on a course
- By bringing younger people in to the town, some of whom might then stay to work/ start businesses
- By being a source of new skills/ knowledge to local businesses and organisations
- By giving local people a sense of some exciting opportunities on their doorstep

Why 'regenerative practice'?

'Regenerative' is a term/ concept with increasing currency in sustainability discourse and beyond. Its popularity is because it highlights the need to move from simply sustaining what is (systems many of which are broken), to repairing and restoring.

In terms of transitions management, it is recognised that radical transitions require not incremental improvements but entirely new ways of doing things – which in many cases might actually be older ways of doing things – and the breakdown/ retiring of existing problematic systems and practices.

Although the term 'regenerative' is often used in conjunction with a specific practice e.g. farming, fashion, food, forestry, etc, we are not at this stage specifying a domain or domains of focus. It may be that such a focus emerges over time, but it may also be that there are common principles to thinking and practicing regeneratively that cut across industrial sectors (silos which may well need disrupting in any case), and that working in an interdisciplinary way would reap benefits.

Why this approach

Fertile ground

Bridport is a promising place to develop new experiments in slow living and regenerative practice

- There is a strong culture of sustainability, and receptiveness to sustainability initiatives/ action, with an established Transition Town group ('Sustainable Bridport'), Bridport Food Matters, a local renewable energy club, a Fashion Revolution group, and so on.
- There have been some recent activities relating to regenerative farming and construction: in the form of a course at Tamarisk Farm ('The Agroecological Way') and a pilot scheme to match new entrants to farming with landowners ('Feeding Bridport Direct'), and a hemp-growing project for natural construction materials led by Raise the Roof.
- There is a large creative, craft-based, and entrepreneurial business community.
- There are significant local infrastructure assets in the form of land of varying types, farms and farm buildings, industrial estates, studio space and workshops, cultural infrastructure including three theatres and several galleries, and infrastructure supporting the circular economy including several markets, and second-hand traders.
- There is a thriving creative and craft-based community, with a long history of arts practice
- There are high levels of qualification and expertise in the community, and plenty of untapped resource in the retired/ semi-retired community that could be brought into play for practice research and teaching
- In general, being outside of the mainstream is an advantage where developing new practices and experiments with models is concerned: Bridport's remoteness/ relative isolation and availability of space then become an asset rather than a hindrance.
- In terms of Bridport's existing reputation, the theme fits well for place-branding purposes.
- Looking county-wide, Dorset's LSIP priorities include skills for net zero and agriculture/ argi-tech.

Themes and stakeholders/ assets

The themes for the College are yet to be agreed: the list below is based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and relating that to areas where Bridport has demonstrable expertise, infrastructure, and activity. A selection of relevant organisations under each theme are noted here (NB not exhaustive).

Economics & business Stir to Action, Crowdfunder, the LSI

Arts & culture The Bridport Arts Centre, the Electric Palace, the Arts Development Company, the Lyric Theatre, numerous festivals and societies for film, art, literature

Health & care Bridport Hospital, Ammonite Medical Centre, numerous care organisations, the Community Shed, the Burrough Harmony Centre

Clothing & textiles Bridport Fashion Revolution, Bridport Fashion & Textiles Network, Rampisham Mill, Mangerton Mill, numerous growers, dyers, makers, markets and second-hand/ vintage traders

Shelter & construction Raise the Roof, Hooke Park, the Boat Building Academy, Magna Housing Association, Bridport Co-housing, Vearse Farm Skills Academy (forthcoming)

Food & farming Discover Farming, Bridport Food Matters, Feeding Bridport Direct, the LWA, Tamarisk Farm, Springtail Farm, Lyme Regis Town Mill

Energy Energy Local Bridport, Dorset Community Energy

Land & place Dorset Wildlife Trust, West Dorset Wilding, Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve, Dorset Local Nature Partnership

The model

Offers/ services/ activities

- Short residential paid-for courses, taught 'in the field'
- Action/ practice research projects
- Knowledge production/ dissemination to wider audiences (podcast, papers etc)
- Courses accredited by a relevant awarded body e.g. a university or City & Guilds

Value proposition/ target audience

- For people who already have a certain amount of expertise in an area of practice but want to learn new models/ ways of being sustainable/ regenerative
- For new entrants to a field (maybe changing career or wanting a taster of something) but keen to start by learning regenerative ways of working

Infrastructure

- Delivered by a range of tutors/ local experts, or experts from elsewhere invited to teach for 1-2 weeks. Development might include training local expert practitioners in teaching.

- Utilising spaces/ locations across town as appropriate to the subject matter
- With a central hub/ home building/ classroom space
- Accommodation would need to be found or created for students. This might involve identifying a suitable building in Bridport and converting to student halls, with facilities for cooking/ dining. The holiday parks may also provide suitable accommodation, particularly in the off-season.

Funding model

Core funding/ start-up investment would be required to set up the institution and get the first courses underway, (even if starting small and iterating/ developing). Over time the college could become largely self-funding through a mix of student fees and fundraising. A Bursary fund would be needed to support local learners and those who cannot afford fees, partly from fundraising and subsidised by paid-for courses.

Inspirational models/ examples

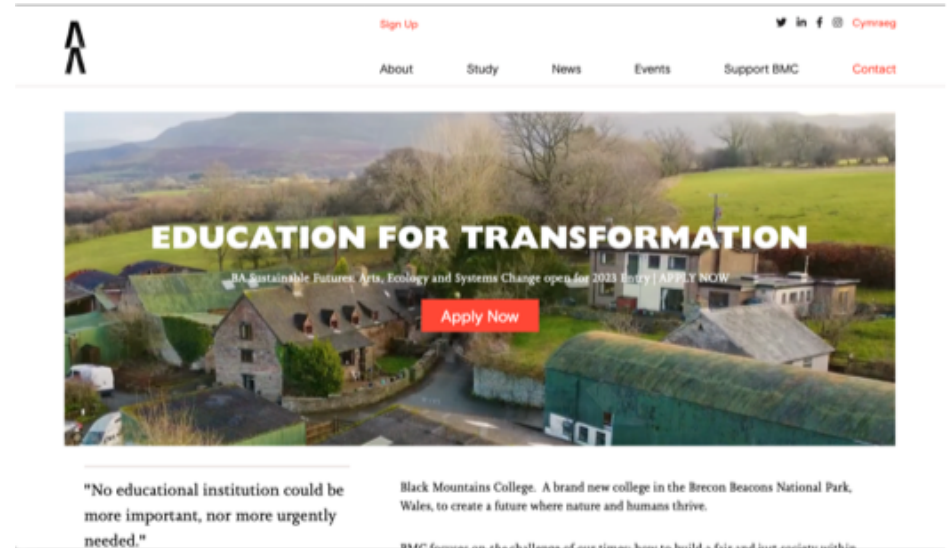
The Apricot Centre

<https://www.apricotcentre.co.uk>



Black Mountains College

<https://blackmountainscollege.uk>



Inspirational models/ examples

Schumacher College

<https://campus.darlington.org/schumacher-college>



Schumacher College

Schumacher College is a progressive college for ecological studies offering **postgraduate and undergraduate programmes, research degrees, short courses and a practical agroecology residency.**

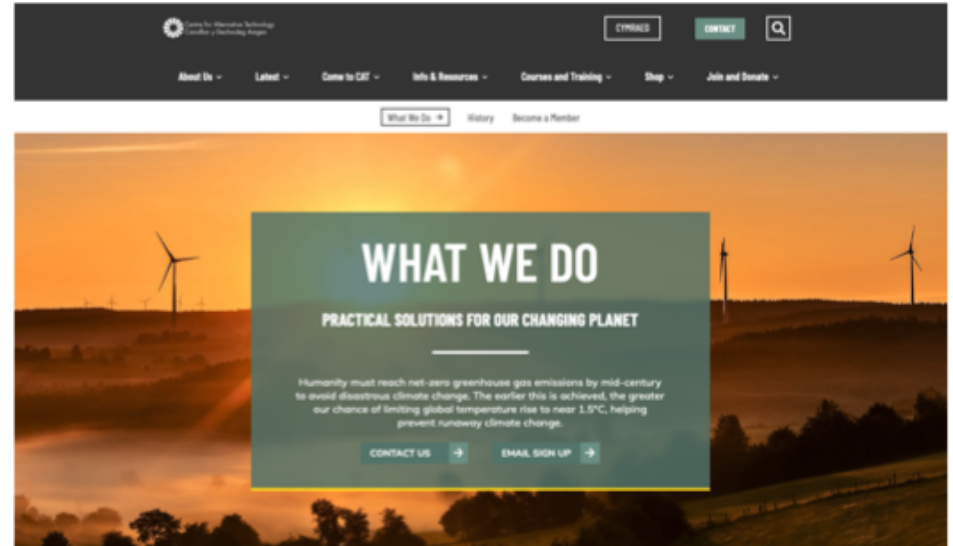
We focus on interactive and experiential education to help students develop the practical skills and strategic thinking required to face 21st century challenges and to instigate regenerative futures.

Our learning ethos is about participating, getting out into the field, into the kitchen, experiencing the world as a starting point for more in-depth enquiry. These experiences then inform anti-reductionist, whole systems thinking that can help to break down



The Centre for Alternative Technology

<https://cat.org.uk>



Centre for Alternative Technology
Centre for Alternative Technology

ABOUT US - LATEST - COME TO CAT - INFO & RESOURCES - COURSES AND TRAINING - SHOP - JOBS AND DONATE

WHAT WE DO - HISTORY - BECOME A MEMBER

WHAT WE DO

PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS FOR OUR CHANGING PLANET

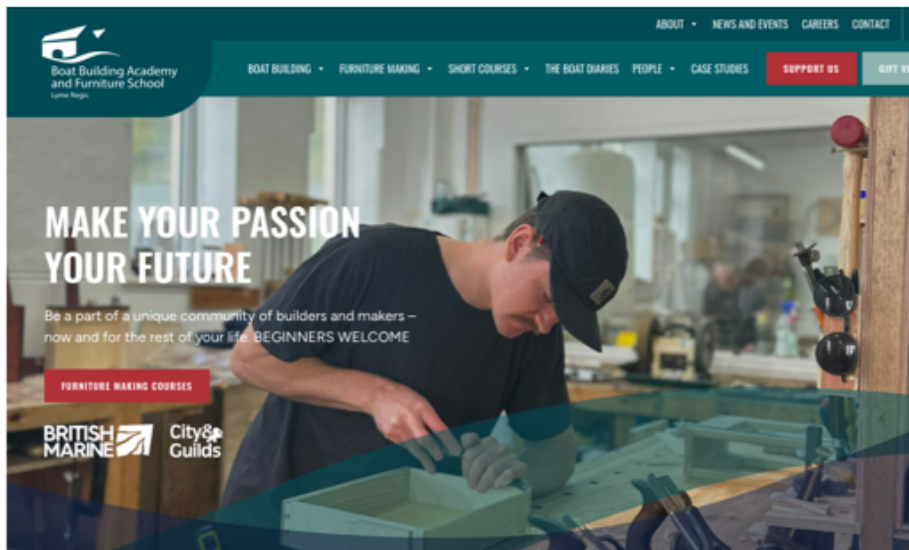
Humanity must reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by mid-century to avoid disastrous climate change. The earlier this is achieved, the greater our chance of limiting global temperature rise to near 1.5°C, helping prevent runaway climate change.

CONTACT US → EMAIL SIGN UP →

Inspirational models/ examples

The Lyme Regis Boat Building Academy and Furniture School

<https://boatbuildingacademy.com>



Domaine de Boisbuchet

<https://www.boisbuchet.org>



Next steps

The proposition for this College are much less resolved than the Bridport Learning Hub, and it is envisaged this will be developed over a longer period. Once the Hub is up and running it will provide some important supportive infrastructure for getting the College going, as well as further insight into the kinds of themes/ subjects that would work.

Immediate next steps would be to:

- Establish a steering group (potentially the same as for the Hub) to guide further development
- Open up conversations with potential funders/ investors/ donors, in order that the vision and plans are developed collaboratively and can benefit from the expertise of such contributors.

Appendix 1: Research data & insights

Research data/ insights

Approach

The research and development process behind this report and its conclusions was as follows:

1. **Desk research** looking into the policy landscape and existing research/ data relating to the issue
2. **Conversations with local stakeholders** were carried out over a period of six months. In the first phase these were exploratory, fact-finding interviews. In the latter phases these were shaping the design of the proposals.
3. **Steering group meetings and community workshops.** These were held at key points in the process to share/ review findings and progress to date and to guide the direction.

Over the course of the project, approximately **100 individuals** from a mixture of backgrounds and sectors, based in or close to Bridport, contributed through either interviews or workshops.

All research was carried out ethically: interview plan/ materials were reviewed by the UAL Research Ethics Sub-committee and in dialogue with an academic mentor.

Research data/ insights

Local population characteristics

Based on information from the 2021 population Census, relative to the national picture, the Bridport Local Area Partnership area has:

- A high proportion of residents from older age groups (aged 65 plus) and a low proportion of young adults (aged 20 to 34);
- A low proportion of adults in employment (probably explained by retirees);
- A high proportion of those in employment who work part-time;
- A high proportion of adults qualified to degree level and a low proportion with no formal qualifications;
- A high proportion of households that own their home outright (with no mortgage);
- A low proportion of households living either in private or social rented housing;
- A high proportion of households that own a car or have access to a car;
- A fairly high level of residents with a limiting disability or long-term health issue;
- A fairly high level of residents who provide regular unpaid care for someone else.

(Data compiled Feb 2023)



- Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) West Dorset 006B (Court Orchard area) is in the bottom 20% in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019), and LSOA West Dorset 008A (Skilling area) is in the bottom 30%. Child poverty in West Dorset is higher than the average for the Dorset Council area.

Research data/ insights

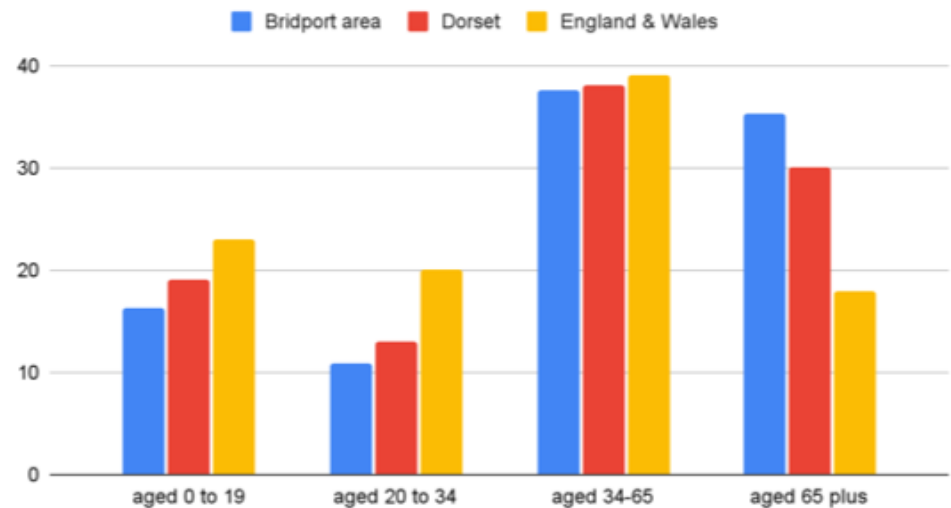
Population and age profile

The chart to the right shows the size of the proportion of people in each age bracket, comparing the Bridport area (see BLAP map for boundaries) with Dorset and England & Wales. Based on data from the 2021 census.

Although Bridport and Dorset lag behind the national picture in terms of numbers of children (aged 0-19), the steepest drop off is in the young adult age bracket (aged 20-34).

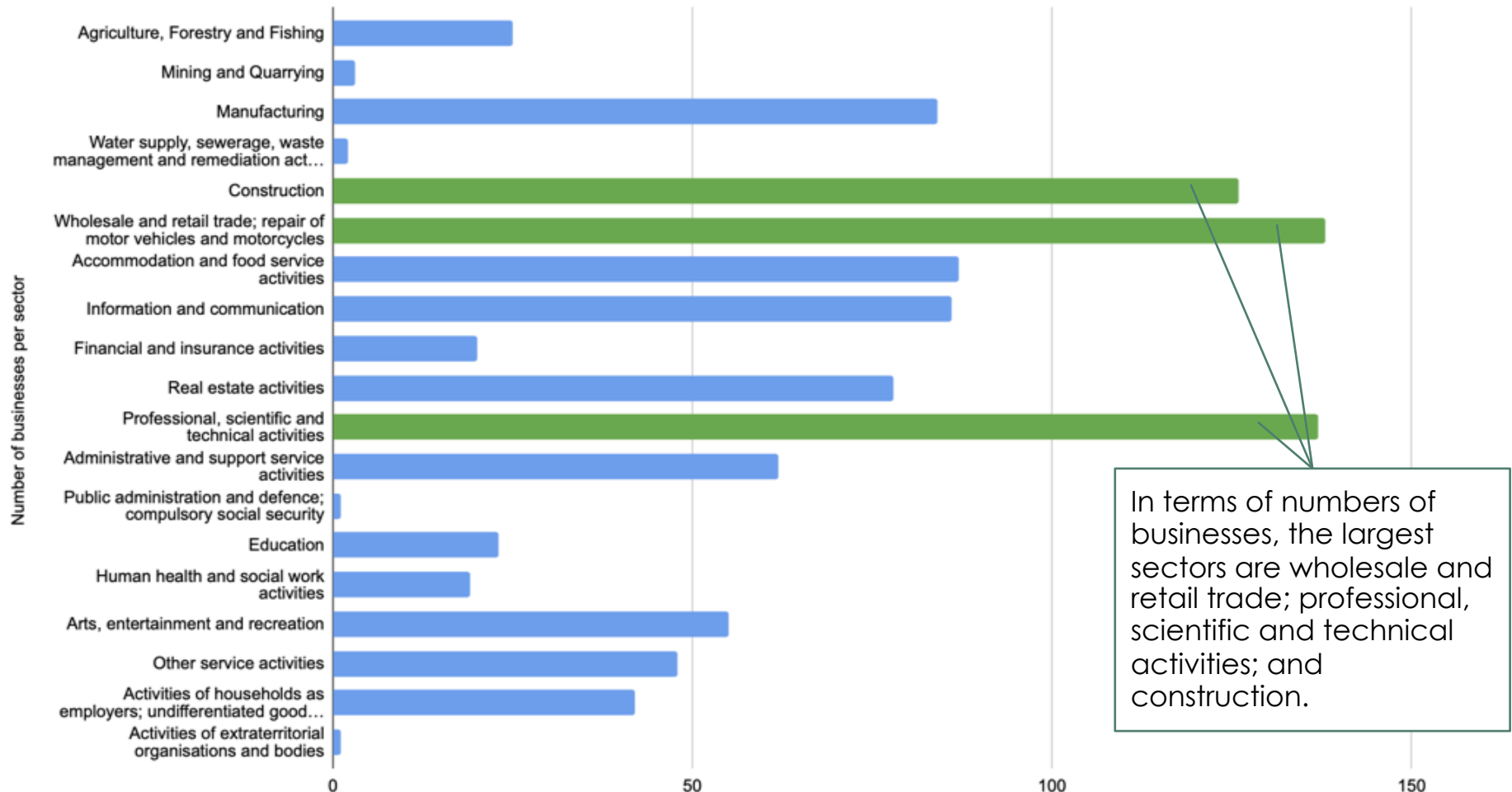
In actual numbers, there are approximately 3550 children in the Bridport area but only 2359 young adults. A significant number of Bridport's young people leave the area, and are not replaced by other young people coming in from elsewhere.

Numbers of residents per age group



Research data/ insights

Businesses in DT6 registered with Companies House



Research data/ insights

Businesses/ employers

- Most employers we spoke to identified recruitment/ retention of skilled workforce as a significant risk for their business, both now and in the future
- Bridport employers are generally supportive of apprenticeships and recognise the desire of young people to gain qualifications and progression; however they see issues with the logistics and delivery of apprenticeships (for example long travel times to College or for assessors to visit apprentices on site).
- Businesses recognise they will need to train new recruits and are happy to provide on-the-job training.
- Many Bridport manufacturers undertake specialist work which requires a highly skilled workforce - and therefore also specialist training in terms of apprenticeships/ further education.
- There is a tension between this high skill level required and the limitation in not being able to compete with London or city salaries.
- To access training for employees, most businesses (if it can't be done online) have to send employees elsewhere, and would welcome the opportunity to have training delivered locally. e.g. Yeovil College have just delivered some bespoke training for Amsafe out of the Bull Hotel.
- Everyone mentioned transport as an issue: Bridport is almost inaccessible by public transport and even with a car is still remote.
- Businesses in construction, manufacturing, and agriculture perceive a long-term cultural shift, both in policy and education, pushing young people towards university and away from practical/ vocational education.
- All the businesses we spoke to were taking significant action to improve their environmental impact and sustainability.
- Manufacturers see the crux of new innovation being around sustainability.
- Perceived barriers to moving faster on sustainable transitions included:
 - the policy/ political/ regulatory landscape
 - lack of data/ knowledge about performance of the business/ benchmarking
 - lack of data/ knowledge about long term performance/ impact of new technologies and materials
 - lack of alternative options/ technologies
 - shifting employee and/ or customer behaviour
 - lack of space
 - the high cost of investing in green tech, or undertaking R&D for sustainability

Research data/ insights

Colleges and FE stakeholders

- There is a degree of uncertainty in the FE policy landscape. T-Levels are being introduced but these aren't universally welcomed by education providers, as they effectively present a narrowing of choice for young people.
- All the Colleges we spoke to were in principle open to collaborating on a new Bridport-based initiative.
- Learning and Skills are actively trying to do more in West Dorset.
- Most Colleges have some students coming from considerable distances (1+ hour of travel).
- Yeovil College has 96 full time learners and 28 Apprentices coming from Bridport. We are awaiting comparable data from other Colleges.
- Colleges have in the past attempted to run satellite operations out of Bridport but these have all closed: it's not known why.
- Weymouth has had satellite hubs in various places but has found these complex and expensive to run.
- Arts University Bournemouth has a number of connections with/ projects in the creative community in Bridport.
- Some of what students study at College requires specialist space/ facilities/ equipment, which may be difficult or prohibitively expensive to replicate at a satellite site in Bridport. Some things are more classroom-based and suitable for hybrid or off-site delivery. Within any one course there may be a mix of these elements.
- Colleges vary in their appetite for running apprenticeships, which are logistically complex to organise. KMC have recently stopped running farming apprenticeships. However Weymouth and Yeovil both have significant numbers of apprentices in different sectors.
- There are over 700 apprenticeships available: most Colleges can only offer a subset of these.
- Weymouth and Learning & Skills have started running green skills courses, and built a brand new retrofit workshop for training students in green tech. Yeovil are also looking at new sustainability-themed courses within construction.
- The next round of LSIF will likely have funding for sustainability-focused training.
- It is possible for individual tutors to tailor their teaching content, within mandated curricula, to include more teaching around sustainability.
- It is sometimes challenging to find people with sufficient industry experience who want to move into teaching in FE (which may involve a pay decrease). Finding assessors is also hard.
- Most businesses in Dorset are micro-enterprises: some training around business development skills might be widely beneficial, and could be easily delivered.

Research data/ insights

Learners

- Sixth formers at Colfox were unequivocal in their views on Bridport as essentially boring and with little to offer them, and their desire to leave to pursue experiences and opportunities elsewhere. Not all were set on going to university, but there was a general perception that well-paid jobs and rewarding careers were likely to be more easily found outside of West Dorset. Bridport's isolation and poor transport connections were also significant problems for them.
- From talking to parents and teachers, we heard that a significant proportion of young people are struggling to get back into mainstream education following COVID.
- The high cost of going to university is increasingly off-putting to some, making other (cheaper) options potentially more attractive.
- Some young people seem to find the travel to Colleges a barrier to access/ sufficient deterrent to not attend.
- There seems to be growing interest around filmmaking with young people, and a number of recent projects in this area.

- There is even less available locally for older learners: and this is a problem given the current government policy emphasis on encouraging older workers to return to work, and/or retrain

Apprentices

- Anyone undertaking apprenticeships locally has to travel to either Weymouth, Yeovil, or Exeter to access training.
- There are some farming apprentices who are travelling to Bicton or Cannington since KMC stopped delivering apprenticeships
- Within farming, there is some concern about the 'traineeship' model excluding young people without the means to support themselves.
- There are also issues about access to land making it difficult for young people to see what the pathway into farming might be.
- Bridmet has apprentices in different subjects and levels of the business who travel to Exeter

Research data/ insights

National policy – T-Levels

- a unified technical qualification with equal status to **A-levels**;
- 2 year course for 16-18 year olds;
- a mix of theoretical work learnt in the classroom in a Further Education (FE) College or in a sixth form in a secondary school
- two industry practical placements with local employers working in partnership with the college or sixth form (45 days)

Organised into a number of 'pathways':

- Agriculture, environmental and animal care;
- business and administration;
- construction;
- digital;
- engineering and manufacturing;
- education and early years;
- health and science;
- legal, finance and accounting;
- Animal Care and Management;
- Catering;
- Craft and Design;
- Hairdressing, Barbering and Beauty Therapy;
- Media, Broadcast and Production

Central-government funded skills development programmes

- Skills Boot Camps – 12/16 week courses to upskill or skill the workforce in technical skills needed by business.
- Apprenticeship promotion – focus on driving the benefits of apprenticeships for all at all levels.
- Mid-life MOT's – DWP funded initiative to work with 40+ workforce to ensure sustainable employment, financial planning and wellbeing through to retirement.
- Careers Hubs – Careers and Enterprise Company bringing employers, schools and colleges together to transform careers education
- UK Social Prosperity Fund 2024/25 – skills funding anticipated to local authorities
- Multiply – flexible funding to support numeracy skills across the population age 16+
- Restart Programme – DWP funded flagship programme providing coaching, skills, workshops for unemployed workforce
- Strategic Development fund – DfE funds supporting FE college providers with capital purchases (Dorset won £1.6m 2022/23).
- Local Skills Improvement Plans – strategic technical education (L3) planning through Employer Relationship Bodies to deliver targeted output for local businesses
- Local Skills Improvement Fund – c.£98m strategic fund for L3 providers to deliver LSIP outcomes

Research data/ insights

Regional policy- Dorset Local Skills Improvement Plan

A 'local skills improvement plan' (LSIP) is a plan which is developed by an employer representative body (ERB) for a specified area; draws on the views of employers operating within the specified area, and any other evidence, to summarise the skills, capabilities or expertise that are, or may in the future be, required in the specified area; and identifies actions that relevant providers can take regarding any English-funded post-16 technical education or training that they provide so as to address the requirements mentioned.

There will be funding attached to the delivery of these plans. In Dorset, this is being coordinated by the Dorset Chamber: <https://dorsetchamber.co.uk/lcip/priorities/>

Sectors identified for priority attention in Dorset:

- Agriculture, Agri-tech and Aquaculture
- Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering including Aerospace, Defence and Marine
- Construction
- Digital Tech and Creative
- Health and Social Care

Themes

- Transferable 'people' skills
- Skills needed to achieve Net Zero targets
- SEN, NEETs & unemployed adults

Dorset Green Skills Hub

A joint partnership initiative between Bournemouth & Poole College, Weymouth College and Skills & Learning Adult Community Education.

Funded from the government's Strategic Development Fund:

- £800,000 to Bournemouth & Poole College to deliver free marine and automotive short training courses, introducing technicians to electric vehicle and boat engine technologies to ensure that these sectors have the skills to facilitate the growth locally in sustainable, climate-friendly green technologies.
- £800,000 to Weymouth College to deliver green upskilling training courses in construction
- £50,000 has been awarded to Skills & Learning Adult Community Education for sustainability awareness raising.

Research data/ insights

Fresh start

"Freshstart was a free program offered at Kingston College to any adult who wanted to get back into some kind of learning. It was an afternoon and evening option course which lasted around 8 weeks and explored different facets of learning/ training for people who had for whatever reason lost out or quit education. This was an open door program but would include: unemployed people who needed to reskill, ex-offenders, young single mums, women (and some men) returners, people with mental health issues, indeed anyone, which included myself at one point, who dropped out of formal education but had a real desire to learn. It covered the basics of communication, working in teams, Study Skills, learning styles, presentation, using IT (which at the time dealt with cutting edge stuff like Word, Powerpoint, setting up an email address and how to use the WWW for research!) We also touched on some subject specific stuff with Guest presenters talking through subjects including: law, life sciences, business and management and so on. This may lead to applying for a course, changing career, starting a business, being more confident or nothing at all, but rarely the last one. Anyway, those who did it seemed to get a lot out of it." (Email correspondence, Phil George.)

Appendix 2: BLH delivery partners

Delivery partners: detail re relationship with Hub

Skills & Learning ACE

Currently offer free courses on a range of subjects to adult learners. Mostly these take place in Poole and Bournemouth but they are keen to deliver more in Bridport (Wendy Maggs - main point of contact - lives in Bridport). They have some ESOL courses running at the Council and Quaker meeting house. And have agreed with the LSI/ Rachel Dunford at Crowdfunder to run courses there in september. They have Shared Prosperity Fund funding specifically for Maths/ numeracy ('Multiply').

Key bit of information: if there's a group of 8 people who want to study something they can run a course. So a job for the hub could be to find any areas of common interest where there would be appetite for courses.

They also want to hear from people who would like to become tutors, as they find it difficult to recruit locally (partly because job ads get posted on BCP council webpages).

Contact: Wendy Maggs

Local Skills Improvement Plan

Dorset Chamber now have 2 more years of funding to do some implementation on this. They're really interested in the Hub model and how it might be applied in other areas. Will be particularly interested in evaluation.

Contact: Nicola Newman.

Dorset Growth Hub

Business support services run by WSX Enterprise (a social enterprise) for Dorset Council, dealing with everywhere except BCP area. Offer 121 business counselling/ advice sessions, advice on financing, have a stock of 200 short video tutorials on different topics, run networking events, training webinars for start-ups, run some co-working spaces, organise collaboration hubs (sector-based peer groups). Would like to do more in Bridport but have found engagement in Bridport very low/ difficult historically. Keen to collaborate on the business support element of the Bridport Learning Hub and could potentially design something specific to go into the next round of SPF funding.

Contact: Steve Bulley

Delivery partners: detail re relationship with Hub

The Arts Development Company

Keen to collaborate on the arts/ culture side of things. They can offer a mentoring network (currently oversubscribed), as well as training on specific things. Have a good overview of different training available, and are commissioning something at the moment looking at what is available countywide.

Contact: Cleo Evans.

Landworkers Alliance

Keen on the careers fair element of the proposal. Would be interested in coordinating a green/ land-based careers fair (with funding). They can also provide information/ signposting around training, connect learners up with work experience on farms and market gardens, provide content in the form of videos/ clips, direct people to specialist courses/ training. Also have some training/ curricula which could be delivered in Bridport.

Contact: Rebecca (Bee) Laughton

Bridport Library

Run by Dorset Council. Strategy currently in development which may lead to the library being open more hours/ days. They have a meeting room available for hire for a reasonable rate, as well as desk space throughout the library and computers/ printers upstairs. The whole of the downstairs can be moved around/ opened up (bookcases are on wheels) for events etc. The whole building can be hired out of hours. A good space to connect inclusively with the community.

Contact: Claire Leech

LSI

Although the LSI is potentially a suitable space for Hub activities, currently the main tenant is Crowdfunder who are using most of the building. They are able to do some things to support the community, however. I

Contact: Rachel Dunford.

Delivery partners: detail re relationship with Hub

Discover Farming

Charitable organisation connected to the Melplash Show, concerned with education about land/ agriculture, and getting young people into careers in agriculture. Provides a certain level of education and careers advice. Run activities with primary schools and at Washingpool Farm in the classroom there. Do public engagement activities (for children) at the Melplash Show. Have a network of mentors/ experts who give advice guidance on different aspects of agricultural careers broadly - a service that is not well-used currently. Good informative website to point people towards.

Contact: Will Bowditch

BBA

Already run taster days where pupils get to make something in the workshop (funded by Sybil Fine Foundation - it costs them c. £2-3000 to run one). Are very keen to get local people in the door and give them a taste of boatbuilding/ woodworking, especially women and people from underprivileged backgrounds.

Can offer a network of people to draw on for one-off conversations. Do a lot of fundraising to provide bursaries for their courses. Very keen to collaborate with the Hub. Happy to give talks.

Contact: Will Reed

Bridport Youth and Community Centre

Run 3 different youth groups - 1 juniors and 2 seniors. Offer activities and a social space, and a connection with youth workers. Catering up to 25 technically but mostly under 18s. Most who come to them are on the Youth at Risk Register or in the judicial system. Very keen to collaborate: co-developed the idea for the programme of visits to businesses for their seniors group. Would need funding to pay for additional staff and transport. The Centre itself has lots of space of different kinds and all rooms are available to hire.

Contact: Heather Marston

Delivery partners: detail re relationship with Hub

Mountjoy School, Beaminster

Happy to support where possible e.g. offering volunteering opportunities or facilitating apprenticeships.

Contact: Gillian Howard

Bridport Job Centre

Happy to be involved and support, and direct learners to the Hub. Good insight into the employer community, and good contacts into a range of different learner groups. Can also potentially offer a space for meeting with learners.

Contact: Di Shearing

Appendix 3: Feedback/ comments

Feedback on final draft 27th July

Steve Bulley/ Dorset Growth Hub

Re business incubator element: for Bridport businesses 'growth' / scaling might not be the most important thing. Some people just want to stay at the size they are. Maybe put the emphasis on other things like sustainability. Also business incubator probably not the right concept/ term for Bridport

Indigo May Roe (parent)

I'd like to see it aiming for a permanent pc lab in the future for more IT courses to be supported

Nicola Newman/ Dorset Chamber

I'm keen to make sure the LSIP delivery model builds on your final report and agreed/funded work plan. It feels like it could be a model for other areas too that the LSIP/Chamber can help to connect and amplify.

Phil George/ retired FE educator

Xerte: As mentioned, I have been around this project since it pretty much started as an open source, free, online teaching and learning tool which could easily be edited by teachers or anyone else who wanted to deliver target online learning solutions for a cohort of students in realtime. It comprised 4 basic pages then, now it is over 130 and is a fully accessible customisable and yet still free platform. It may not be as fancy pants as some of the paid for stuff but I still think it is brilliant at what it does.

<https://xerte.org.uk/index.php/en/>

https://xot.xerte.org.uk/play_116#xertepagetypes

https://xot.xerte.org.uk/play.php?template_id=150#page1

https://xerte.cardiff.ac.uk/play_10962#page1

https://xot.futureteacher.eu/play.php?template_id=4#home