

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority Employment and Skills Strategy

December 2021 – FINAL DRAFT

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Executive Summary

Context

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is core to the UK's future growth, global competitiveness and zero-carbon transition. It is a major economic engine of the national economy and of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and, prior to the pandemic, a net contributor to the Exchequer.

Firing this engine are the thousands of people who live and work in the area. Now, more than ever, as people and the businesses and organisations in which they work continue to face distress and disruption wrought by Covid-19, there is a need for an employment and skills system that matches their needs and opportunities, and disparities between places.

There are large, employed workforces in much of the area and employment growth in places which host priority innovation based growth sectors, such as agritech, advanced manufacturing, digital and life sciences. However, this is not a consistent pattern. In Fenland, for example, self-employment has risen alongside a drop in employment levels, with more people working in lower occupational levels, pointing to a need here for job creation and business growth.

High-level skills growth is slowing, and school leavers across the area are more likely to go straight into work than on to education or training, risking people missing out on upskilling and further career progression. There are lower than average rates of progression from school into Higher Education, Further Education *and* apprenticeships, with variation across places – some places deliver more apprenticeships, while in others there is higher uptake of academic routes.

A recent rise in economic inactivity and claimant counts as a result of Covid-19 means that support for people in and outside of the DWP system could be strengthened to support people into and between work. This, with the raft of changes facing employers in Covid-19 recovery, Brexit, transition to net zero and Industry 4.0, point to a need for life-wide and lifelong learning and careers support, along with strengthened links between employers and providers to support careers advice and education beyond school and outside of an educational setting.

As our society ages and people pursue longer and changing careers, we need agile people-centred learning and careers support, with strengthened links between employers and providers to enable provision of adult careers advice to support people into *and* between work. This advice and access should also draw in wider learning experiences that build personal and life skills, unconnected to work.

An updated vision

This strategy builds on the ambition for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough set out in the 2019 Skills Strategy. The updated vision is for:

A successful, globally competitive economy offering high-skilled, well-paid, good quality jobs, delivering increased productivity and prosperity to support strong, sustainable and healthy communities and enabled by an inclusive, world-class local skills system that matches the needs of our employers, learners and communities.

Going further than the 2019 strategy, this update also sets out what this vision means for each of the groups interacting with the skills system: people, employers, providers and place leaders:



People experience fulfilment and good physical and mental health with productive, quality working lives. They drive their own learning and career journeys and feel confident to enter and re-enter the labour market over the course of their lives. They can access support and learning to meet their personal and work ambitions when and how they need.



Employers are providing good quality jobs; have the skills they need in their staff and can recruit the right person for the right job. They understand their skills needs and their inputs shape an agile, responsive skills system that delivers a regional pipeline of talent, matched to job opportunities to support strong businesses and enable business growth.



Providers work collaboratively across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in an integrated education and skills system to deliver learning, qualifications, careers education and support to enable people to enter the labour market in the ways that suit individual's needs and ambitions.

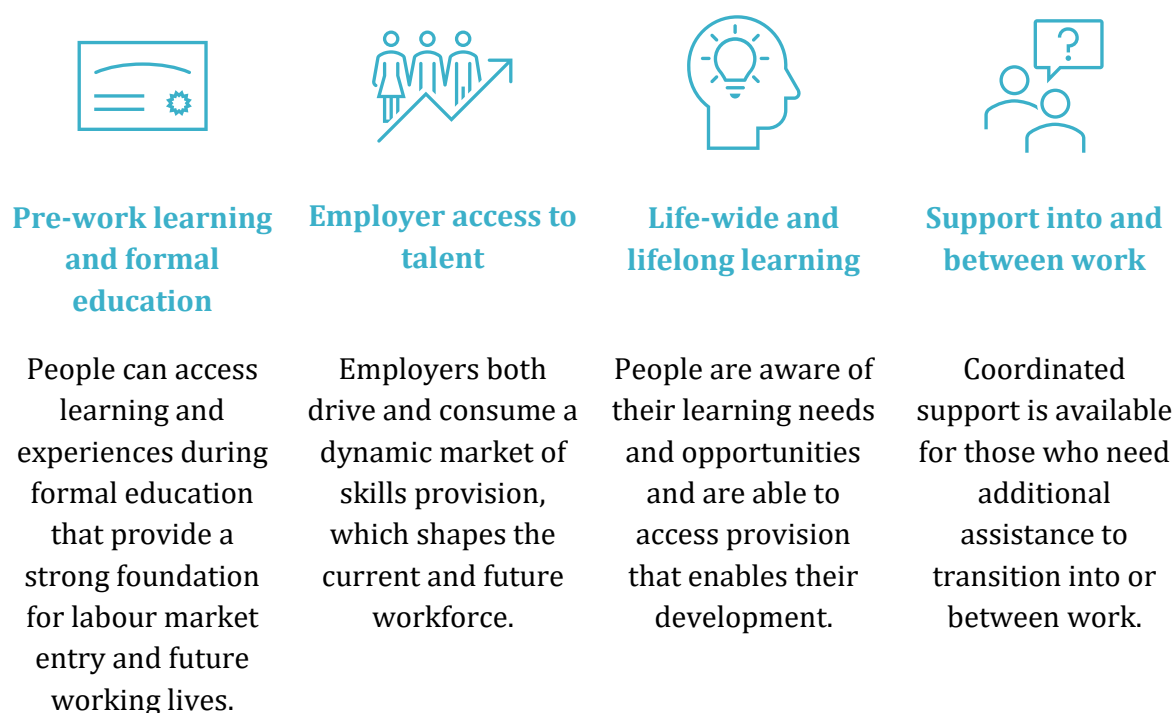


Place leaders secure outcomes for the whole place, convening and supporting collaboration between employers and the integrated skills system, as well as linking into other local services for people across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to lead healthy lives and fulfilling careers.

These vision statements may read as common sense, but the system across the area struggles (and has historically struggled) to deliver these experiences. There is more that can be done so that people are universally drivers of their own personal development, learning and careers journeys, and can access the support they need, so that employers can get the skills they need for their staff, so that providers work collaboratively across our area, and so that the Combined Authority and place leaders empower, enable and convene. More, and more effective, collaboration between all parties in the system is critical to achieving this as the status quo in the future.

The updated vision also defines new themes on which to focus the strategy. These reflect the four areas where residents and employers can benefit most from an ambitious skills system that supports the development of life and work skills, and through which the area grows a strong and inclusive labour market.

Figure 1. Core themes for employment and skills







Whilst the detail of the action required to ensure these elements are in place will evolve as time passes and the context changes, these themes should remain stable, setting the direction and providing a reference point to maintain course.

To guide action under each of these themes the strategy document sets out a series of long-term outcomes and progress measures, steering the work of partners across the area in achieving the vision and enabling people, employers, providers and place leaders to experience the skills system in this way.

Moving forward

This vision for the skills system is a long-term project. The starting point is ensuring that short-term strategic priorities are approached as a step in the right direction towards longer-term change. Focus now and in the first five years will be on the following short-term priorities:

Figure 2. Short-term priorities

<p>Pre-work learning and formal education</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving careers education, specifically around STEM and green skills, as well as information, advice and guidance • Widening education access and participation to make education more inclusive and the student body (and future workforce) more diverse • Enhancing exposure to role models, work experience, and understanding of various training routes into sectors and occupations • Capital investment to improve teaching facilities and kit, particularly for providers of FE, alongside support for staff capacity building
<p>Employer access to talent</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Covid-19 recovery, growth and net zero transition by developing priority skills and responding to acute issues • Driving up and sustaining employers' engagement with and influence on education and training • Embedding modern work practices and conditions and improving job quality
<p>Life-wide and lifelong learning</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving access to careers information, advice and guidance at any age • Providing support to upskill and reskill in response to economic restructuring (e.g. following covid-19, Brexit, digitisation, as net zero transition intensifies) • Increasing work-based learning, particularly apprenticeships, and introducing more accessible formats (e.g. short courses/ online/blended learning) • Ensuring inclusion in continued and community learning and support for disadvantaged people, adults with SEN, care leavers and ex-offenders
<p>Support into and between work</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting unemployed and NEETs into training and employment • Providing support for disadvantaged groups to access the labour market • Targeting support for Covid-19 recovery and transitions for displaced workers

To deliver on short-term priorities, the Combined Authority will set strategic delivery plans with five-year terms that will form part of the wider Economic Growth Strategy. Detailed action plans will be developed and agreed for each Local Authority, addressing short-term priorities in such a way that action will move forward the process of delivering the long-term vision.

These action plans will consider:

- **Things already in motion** - activities/interventions which are funded, approved and are either already being delivered or which will be delivered over the next five years.
- **Things needed in the future** - activities/interventions which are needed to underpin longer term and future development/growth, for which additional exploration, investment and potential system change will be required.

Together partners across the area also need to start preparing the ground now for some bigger change projects that the vision calls for. Some of these can be contributed to by shorter-term projects, but they will need further scoping and iterative development to ensure all partners and stakeholders are brought along the change journey.

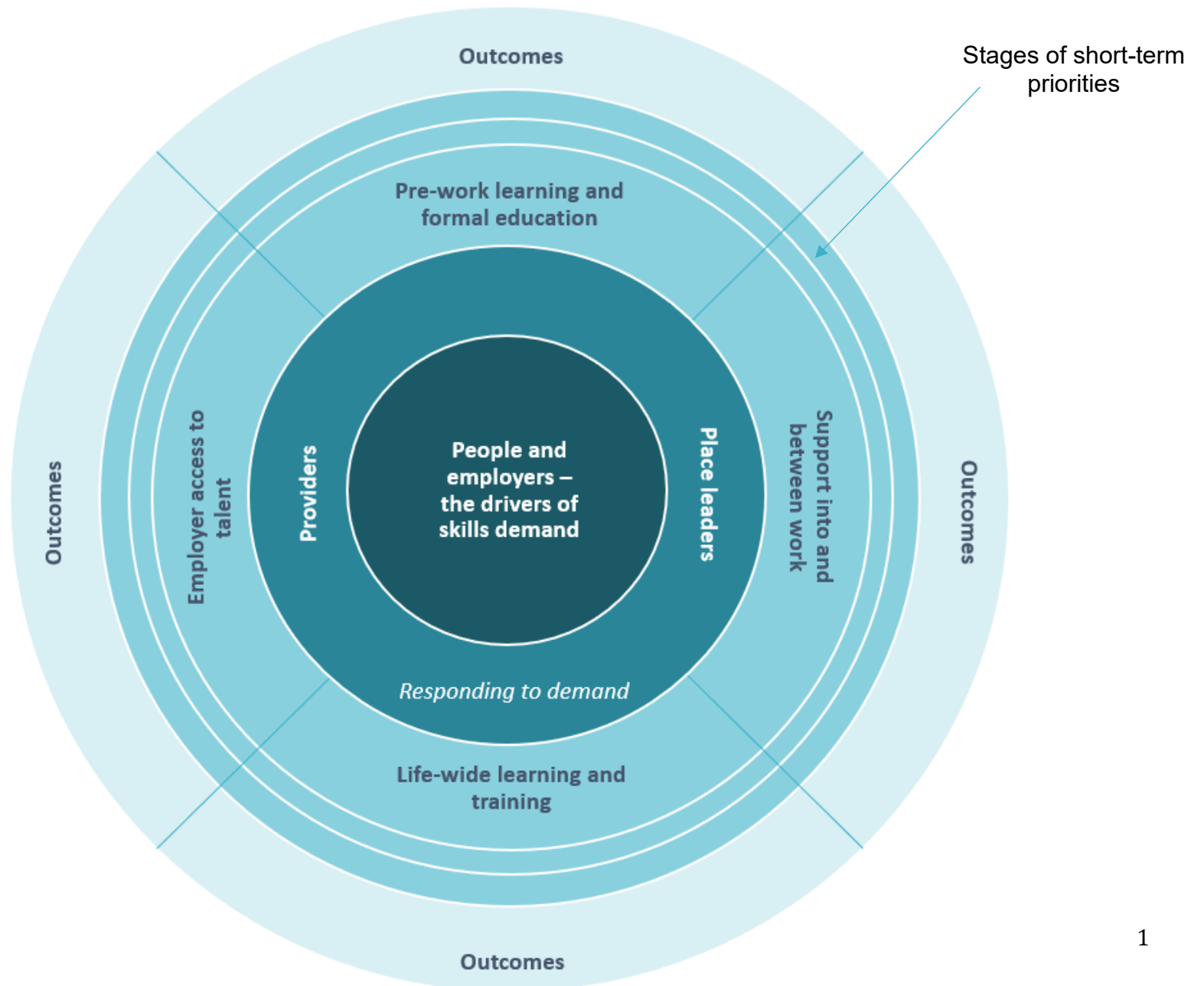
Three change projects have been identified to ensure **effective** provision is delivered using an **agile** approach, in a way suited to the nuances of **places**:

1. A regional curriculum enabling strategic collaboration amongst providers, with learning and training aligned to regional job opportunities and careers.
2. A dual-track skills and training system, anticipating long-term needs and responding with agility in the short-term.
3. A coordinated place-based action framework, to engage all stakeholders in addressing multiple/complex issues.

Cutting across all of these will be ongoing the action of Combined Authority, Local Authorities and the Cambridge and Peterborough Integrated Care System to work together, and with wider partners, to place health and wellbeing at the centre of system development and delivery.

The diagram below maps a summary of the Employment and Skills Strategy and the system in the area. Learners and employers are at the core, as the drivers of skills demand, with providers and place leaders surrounding this and responding to it. The response – provision and supply of skills, will be aligned to themes, in layers that will ripple out to deliver on short-term priorities and long-term outcomes.

The strategy in summary

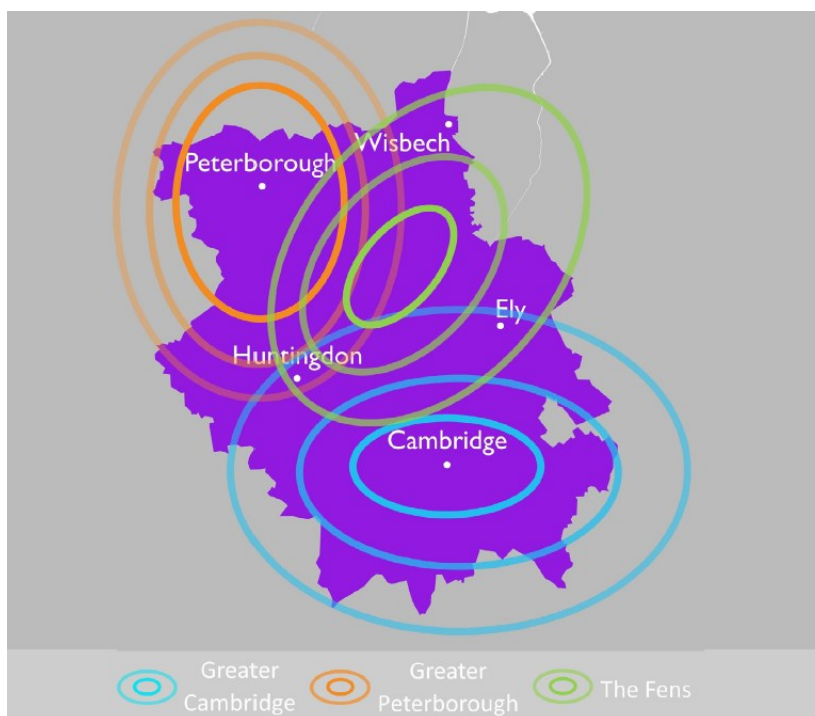


1 Introduction

Context

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is an area of contrasts, with distinct differences in needs and opportunities across its communities. The six local authority areas which make up the place each have different strengths and challenges, but the global competitiveness of the area depends on the future success of all. The 2018 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER) identified three interdependent subeconomies across the geography, Greater Peterborough, Greater Cambridge and the Fens.

Figure 3. CPIER interdependent sub-economies

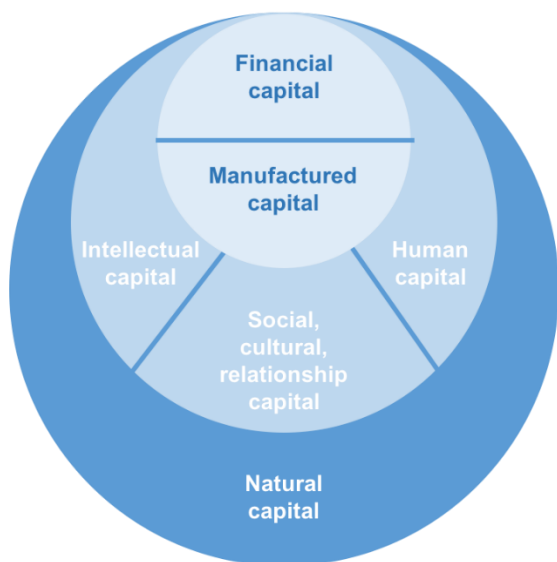


Following the CPIER, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's (CPCA) previous Skills Strategy *Developing Talent: Connecting the Disconnect* was published in 2019 with an overarching imperative to deliver 'an inclusive, world-class local skills eco-system that matches the needs of our employers, learners and communities'.

Whilst few would question the ongoing relevance of this mission, the intervening years have seen significant changes to the national and global context: Great Britain has left the European Union and Covid-19 has impacted the economy, people's health, wellbeing, and how they work and learn. The UK's economic recovery from the pandemic has been aligned both to the levelling-up agenda, aiming to reduce inequalities between different parts of the country that Covid-19 has laid bare and the intensifying drive to attain net zero carbon emissions in the UK by 2050. Locally, Local Authorities and the Combined Authority (CA) have worked collaboratively to develop a new Local Economic Recovery Strategy (LERS),

with a mission to help people and businesses manage the impact of the pandemic, and to adapt to the new norms in employment, sectors and markets. Mayoral elections in 2021 brought a new Mayor, Dr Nik Johnson, to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, mandated to place his values of compassion, co-operation and community at the heart of future strategic plans. A first step in this is the adoption of a six capitals approach across CPCA.

Figure 4. The six capitals approach



With the economy re-opening, vaccination numbers rising and deaths falling, a new set of challenges are to be faced by the region. In the short-term, the end of the Government's extensive employment support schemes mean many individuals, particularly those in precarious work, are at risk of unemployment. Longer-term, Covid-19 has accelerated trends such as automation, which combined with transitioning industries to net zero, risk further unemployment and will require reskilling and upskilling.

Many good things have been achieved through the actions flowing from the current skills strategy, not least of which are the establishment of the new Anglia Ruskin University Peterborough (set to open in the academic year 2022/23), the first localised commissioning of Adult Education with devolved funds, and the launch of Growth Works with Skills, with a demand-led online platform connecting learning and employers across the region. However, as the area moves through the *Respond* phase of the LERS and further into *Recovery*, it has been essential to review and update the skills strategy, to reflect the changing skills needs and challenges in the current and future economic context.

Anchored by the priorities identified in the CPIER and the region's Local Industrial Strategy and reflecting the current LERS, this refreshed skills strategy convenes and validates the current strategic priorities for the area. Looking further to the future, the document also sets out a longer-term vision for the future of the skills system in the region and the outcomes it needs to deliver for local people and businesses, reflecting nuances in places across the area.

This balance of current and future perspective will allow local stakeholders to coalesce around a shared set of objectives and outcomes, matching investment opportunities to local priorities in the short-term, for example as further packages of recovery support are released from Government, as well guiding longer-term change, for example the transition to net zero.

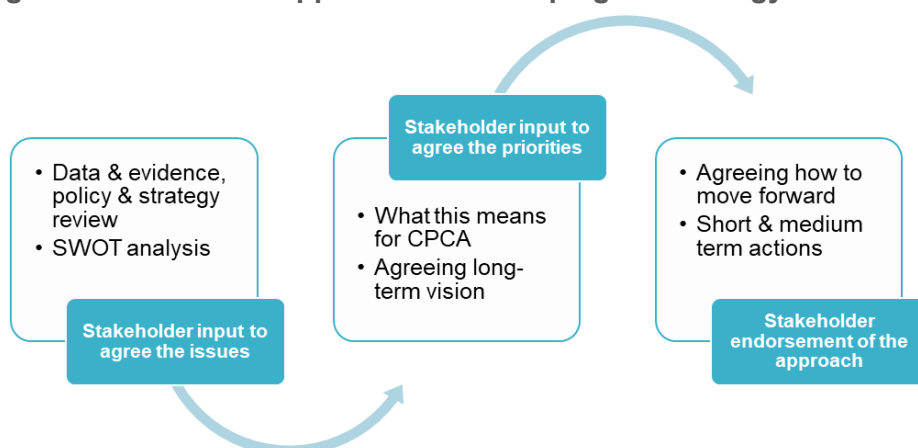
Approach

CPCA has responsibility for developing and implementing the skills strategy and convening the Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) for the sub-region. As part of the devolution agreement, the CA has direct control and responsibility for commissioning of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) along with responsibilities over transport, housing, green energy, careers, business growth and skills brokerage. The co-terminus Business Board provides a private sector led approach to invest in economic growth.

Despite these levers, CPCA cannot tackle the employment and skills issues in the sub-region in isolation. The role of the CA is to provide system leadership across the education, skills and employment continuum. In co-production with public-sector partners, businesses, education institutes, providers¹ and communities, the CA will energise and enable the system to deliver prosperity for all.

The work to develop this strategy engaged with partners across the education and skills system and was undertaken between June and October 2021, incorporating a detailed data and evidence review, an open call for evidence from partners across the region and a series of stakeholder workshop sessions. Throughout the process the CA's Skills Committee, Employment and Skills Board and Business Board have provided input to guide and shape the strategy. The process has been iterative, with partners and stakeholders from across the area engaged multiple times to provide input as the development of the strategy progressed.

Figure 5. An iterative approach to developing the strategy



¹ Throughout this document the term 'provider' refers to all formal and informal settings of education and training, including, schools, colleges, universities, independent and employer-led training and apprenticeship providers and adult and community learning institutes.

A challenge put to the CA by stakeholders in the early stages of the strategy development process was to ensure that this document effectively balanced short-term and long-term strategic priorities; recognising imperatives to act to deliver on existing and pressing priorities *and* setting a vision for change, particularly where issues identified were symptoms of deeper causes which were likely to require sustained, incremental action over a longer period of time.

Accepting this challenge, the strategy presents both long-term outcomes and short-term strategic priorities. Moving forward, the CA's aim is to set strategic planning periods for a maximum of five years, agreeing a sub-set of core priorities, objectives and outcomes to pursue, monitoring progress to delivering on these, and then taking stock and calibrating, prior to setting out a subsequent strategic plan.

2 Where we are now

Population trends

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is an area of more than 850,000 people, with population centres in Peterborough and Cambridge, and much of the population living in surrounding rural towns and villages. **The CA area is growing**, with population growth projected at 2.6% by 2040 against a national projected fall of -13.6%. However, only two of the local authority areas are projected to grow – Peterborough and Fenland – at 11.7% and 9.1% . Peterborough has been one of the fastest growing cities in the UK in recent years.

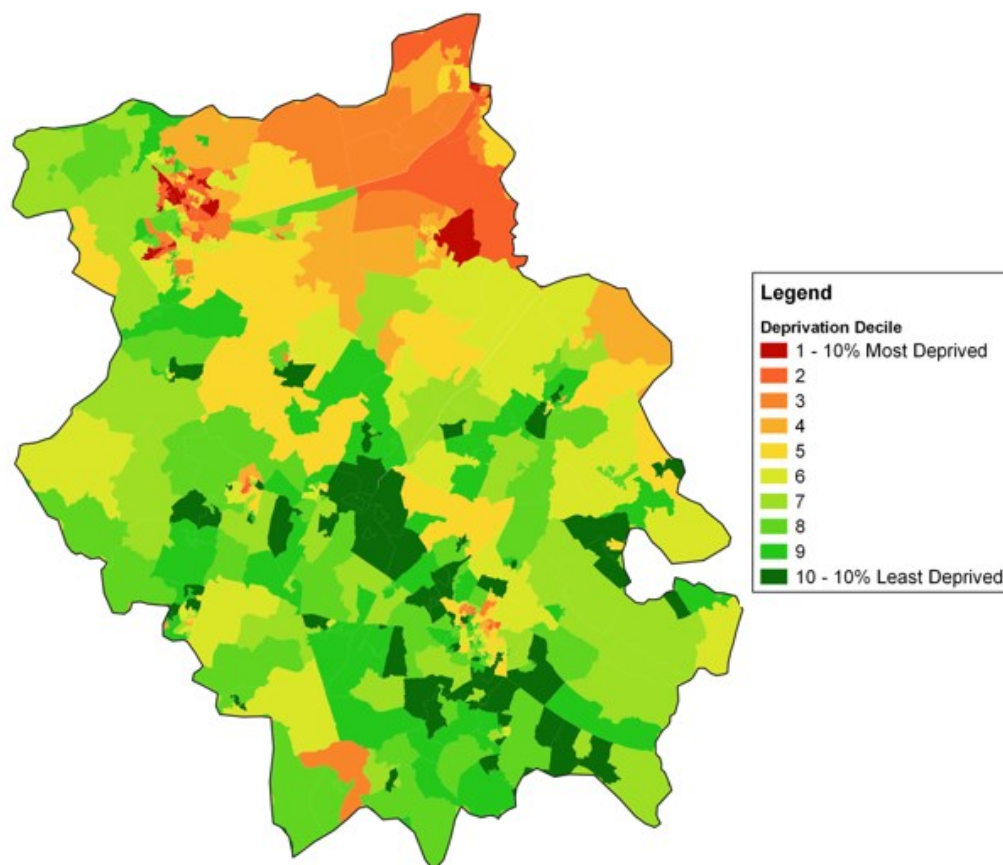
The working age population in the area is growing more slowly than average at just 0.1%, compared with 1.5% growth nationally, suggesting **faster future ageing**. This trend is uneven across the area. Only South Cambridgeshire has working age population growth above average – at 2% compared with 1.5% across the UK. In Cambridge and Huntingdonshire the working age population is falling, and faster than the overall projected population change by 2040 – by -3.4% and -0.3% respectively².

In this part of England, there are fewer deprived areas than average – particularly in income, employment and health. But **there is inequality and there are disparities across the area** – many places experience very low levels of deprivation and offer good quality of life for residents, but deprivation is clustered in Fenland and Peterborough and with pockets in Cambridge³.

² Metro Dynamics analysis of ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) data (2020).

³ Metro Dynamics analysis of MHCLG Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data (2019).

Figure 6. Index of Multiple Deprivation across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (2019)

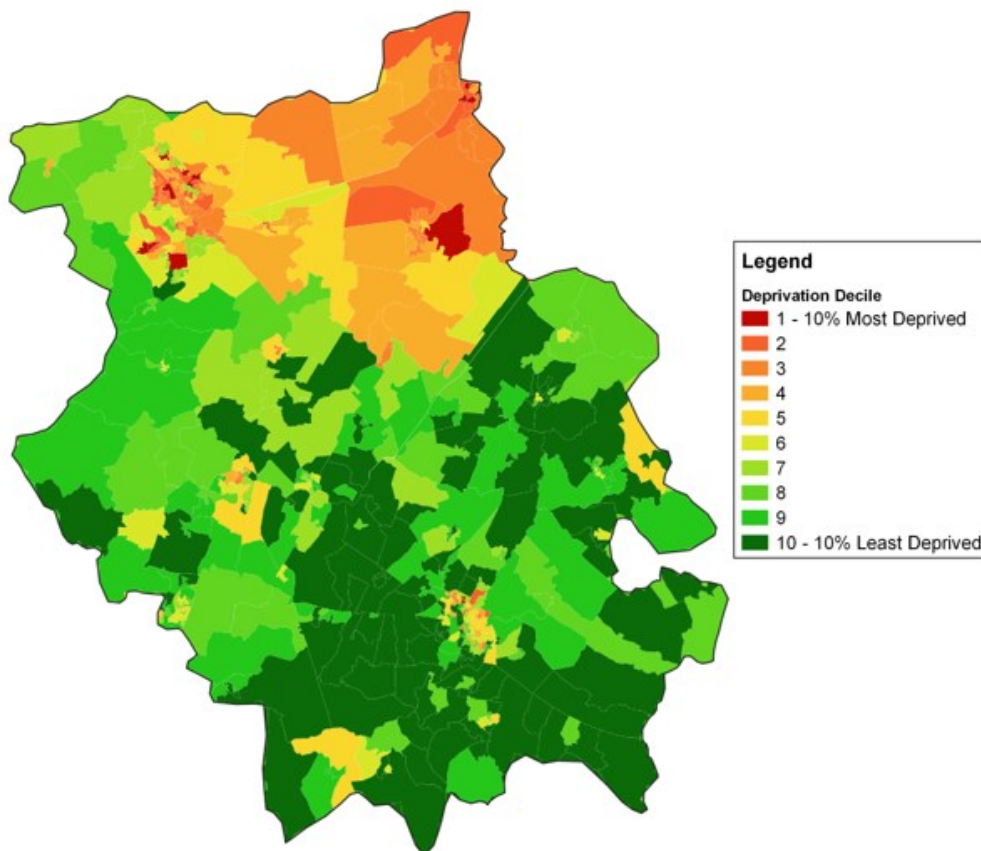


The result of health inequalities across the area (a domain in the Index of Multiple Deprivation) is demonstrated in healthy life expectancy. There are stark differences between local authorities and the communities within them. For instance, in Cambridge healthy life expectancy ranges from 80.4 years in the most deprived communities to 85.2 years in the least deprived communities (above national averages), and in Fenland the range is 73.1 to 77.5 years (below national averages). This compares to the England average of 75 to 82.8 years⁴.

This indicates that across the four themes and throughout people's lives, inclusion will be an important area of focus – among deprived communities, disadvantaged individuals, and those facing additional challenges through school and in adulthood.

⁴ Public Health England, Health Inequalities by Local Authority (2019).

Figure 7. Index of Multiple Deprivation: Health Domain, across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (2019)



Pre-work learning and formal education

Young people leaving school at 18 are less likely to go on to study in Higher Education, Further Education or through an apprenticeship in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough than on average across the country. Only 31.5% are progressing onto HE, compared with 35.2% nationally, with 6.4% progressing onto FE compared with 9% nationally, and 8.5% progressing onto apprenticeships compared with 9.3% nationally. School leavers are more likely to move straight into work rather than continuing education or training than elsewhere in the country.

Although data isn't available to track the kind of work school leavers are moving into, research by the Children's Commissioner for England in 2019 found that while students are staying on at school for longer since the compulsory school leaving age was raised to 18, across England, a rising proportion (18% nationally) are leaving school without level 2 qualifications⁵. This trend can be seen in the data below in Fenland, where more students aged 16-18 are studying vocational courses at levels 1 and 2, and fewer at level 3.

⁵ Children's Commissioner for England, '[The children who leave school with nothing](#)' (2019).

Progression rates at 18 vary by place. The following data reflects progression from schools in the individual local authority areas, not necessarily where students live. This caveat is most visible in the data for South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge, where many of the students progressing from school in Cambridge to university may live in South Cambridgeshire. The lowest rates for progressing into HE are in South Cambridgeshire at 20.5% and East Cambridgeshire at 25.4% compared with the highest at 41.2% in Cambridge and 35.6% in Huntingdonshire. The lowest progression rates into FE at 18 in the area are in Cambridge at 2.8% and Fenland at 4.1%, compared with the highest at 8.3% in Peterborough and 9.8% in South Cambridgeshire. There is higher than average progression into apprenticeships in East Cambridgeshire at 11.4%, Fenland at 10.7%, and South Cambridgeshire at 10%⁶.

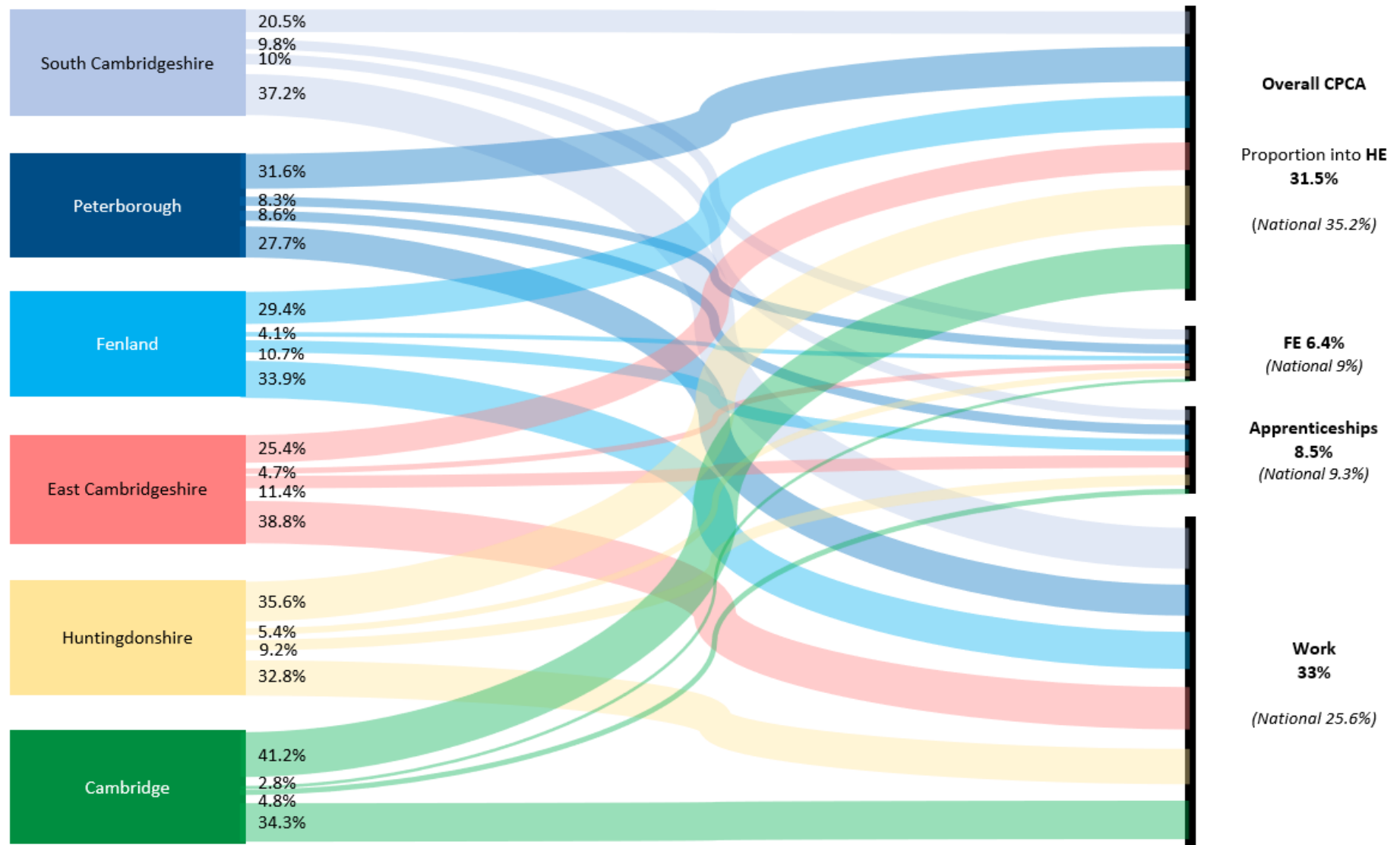
Fewer pupils are studying vocational courses aged 16-18 – with falls in every Cambridgeshire district area, but only by -1% in East Cambridgeshire compared with -25% in South Cambridgeshire and -23% in Cambridge between 2016 and 2019. **More students are pursuing lower level vocational qualifications post-16.** In 2019/20, Y11s progressing onto vocational qualifications were more likely to be at level 1 than 2016-19, and less likely to be at level 3.

More pupils are pursuing A Levels across Cambridgeshire – with an overall 6% rise. But this has grown by 15% in Cambridge compared with a fall of -15% in South Cambridgeshire and little change in Huntingdonshire and Fenland between 2016 and 2019. The vocational/A Level split varies by place – 68% of pupils aged 16-18 in Cambridge study A Levels, while 69% in Fenland study vocational courses. The split is more even in East Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire⁷. This sets up students for HE progression from schools in Cambridge, however, under-prioritises vocational and technical routes, leading to fewer students progressing into FE courses and apprenticeships.

⁶ Metro Dynamics analysis of DfE school leaver destinations data (2019).

⁷ Cambridgeshire County Council Y11 transitions data (2020).

Figure 8. Progression rates at 18 into HE, FE, apprenticeships, and work where students go to school, by local authority area (2018/19)

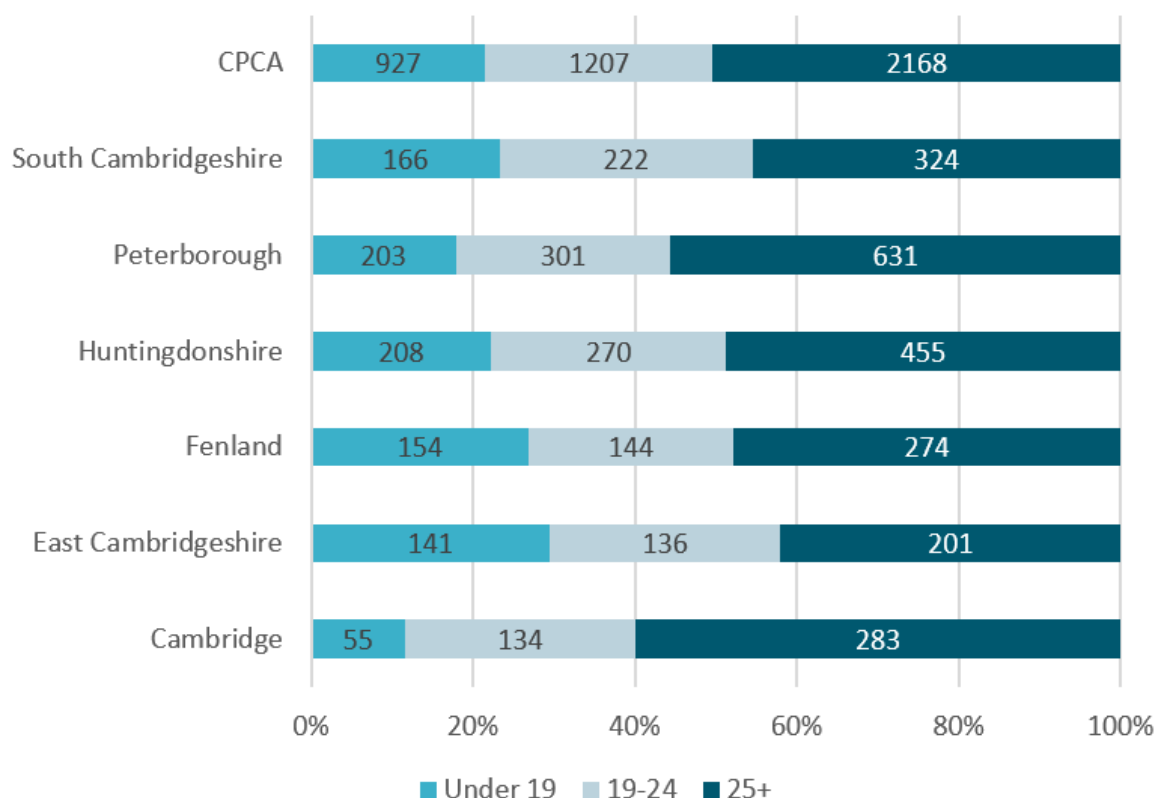


Apprenticeship uptake has been impacted by the Apprenticeship Levy and Covid-19.

The drop in apprenticeship starts between 2019/20 and 2020/21 was larger than the national average at -25% compared with -18%. The most popular subjects of business, administration and law; and health, public sector and care, made up around 60% of total apprenticeship starts, in line with national averages. Manufacturing apprenticeships declined from 16% in 2019/20 to 11% in 2020/21, but apprenticeship starts in construction, planning and the built environment doubled from 4% to 8% from 2019/20-2020/21, increasing to meet national levels⁸.

Across the area, half of all apprenticeship starts are being taken up by adults aged 25+, with Peterborough and Cambridge both recording higher proportions of starts by people in this age group. In Fenland and East Cambridgeshire cohorts tend to be younger, with a higher proportion of starts made by people under age 19. However, CPCA's apprenticeship cohort is getting older. In 2017/18, 44% of learners were aged 25+; by 2019/20 50% of learners were 25+. Meanwhile, over the same time period the proportion of starts by people under age 19 fell from 26% to 22%⁹. This follows a similar trend to nationally, but is at a slightly lower rate, with 23.6% across England.

Figure 9. Number and proportion of apprenticeship starts by local authority area (2019/20)



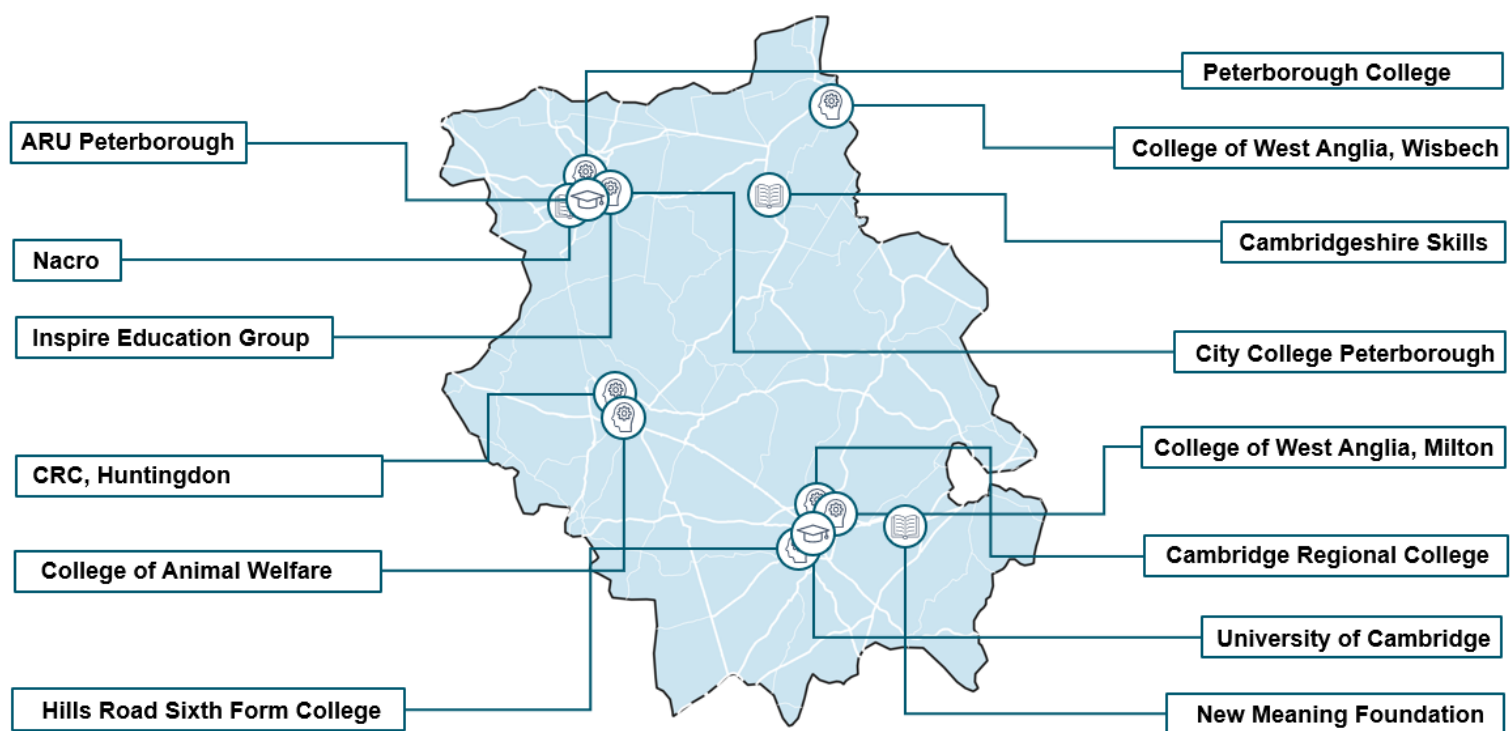
⁸ CPCA apprenticeships data (2021).

⁹ Metro Dynamics analysis for CPCA, *Covid-19 Labour Market Implications for Priority Sectors*, February 2021.

Current participation in Higher Education varies across the area. Huntingdonshire has 8% of its working population currently participating in HE, compared with 6.7% in Peterborough, 5.6% in East Cambridgeshire, 5.2% in Cambridge, 4.4% in South Cambridgeshire, and just 3.2% in Fenland¹⁰.

Education providers, whether on a campus or operating from a satellite site or other venues, play an important role as anchor institutions in their community - providing civic leadership, collaborating, driving investment to renew localities and raise aspirations. However, **patchy engagement with post-16/18 education is exacerbated by education estate and physical and digital access cold-spots** – notable in Fenland and East Cambridgeshire – and including connection and device access challenges for rural and deprived communities. This is an issue that has been identified in the CPIER and CPCA Skills Strategy 2019, and actions in the following sections build on developments already underway.

Figure 10. Education institutions and AEB providers across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough



Alongside variation in access to education and training across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, there are **gaps in opportunities for work experience and exposure to role models** that showcase the range of occupational opportunities in the area. The implementation of T Levels coinciding with Covid-19 has added to the difficulty of students able to access work experience as part of their studies.

¹⁰ Metro Dynamics analysis of ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) data (2020).

Without priority given to careers education and advice at school and in HE and FE provision, **there are gaps in careers guidance, and soft and technical skills that employers need.** A focus on academic routes at school in combination with FE and HE providers incentivised to deliver qualifications rather than skills, means that opportunities are missed to upskill young people in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough for local jobs and future opportunities.

Employer access to talent

Of a total population of 860,000, around 405,000 residents are in employment, slightly above the national average at 76% compared with 75%. Of those in employment, 12% are self-employed, which is slightly below the national average of 13%. Slightly fewer employed people work part-time at 23% compared with 24% nationally.

The CPIER and the LIS identified life sciences, agritech, digital and advanced manufacturing as priority sectors for long-term, innovation-based growth in the region. However, these sectors account for just 20% of employment overall. Identified in the LERS were a set of recovery priority sectors, requiring focus as significant employers and suffering severe disruption from the pandemic: retail, hospitality and leisure, construction, transport, education, manufacturing, health and care.

Businesses, regardless of sector, are facing a raft of changes to which they are responding – including Covid-19 recovery, impact of Brexit, digitisation and Industry 4.0, transition to net zero, and changes and pressures on supply chains. These are driving new ways of working and demand for new technical skills from the workforce. The local knowledge and manufacturing based economy is well placed to innovate and build new opportunities around Industry 4.0 and net zero priorities. But, skills provision needs to both anticipate and respond to the range of changes for sectors and occupations across the area.

There has been resilience in jobs and recovery from Covid-19 – with lower than average furlough rates in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough – at 4.2% of the workforce compared with 5% nationally in August 2021. But **foundational sectors continue to face recruitment demand issues** as a result of Covid-19 and Brexit – for example, retail and hospitality vacancies have risen by 40.2.% and construction by 25% from February 2020 to May 2021¹¹. Overall in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, job postings in September 2021 were 3% higher than across the UK, and 13% higher than pre-pandemic levels, and higher in every area except Cambridge (-5% lower)¹².

GVA and employment in the innovation-based growth sectors is strong and growing – maintaining Cambridgeshire and Peterborough’s role as an economic growth centre. GVA is also growing faster than average in these sectors across the area – at 9.4% compared with 8.6% nationally. Peterborough has the fastest growing GVA at 15%.

¹¹ Cambridgeshire County Council analysis of Burning Glass vacancies data (2021).

¹² Cambridgeshire County Council analysis of EMSI vacancies data (2021).

However, **overall productivity across all sectors has fallen slightly** by -1.1% compared with 1.2% growth nationally. Productivity has only grown in Peterborough – by 7.9%, and Huntingdonshire by 2.9%. Fenland has the lowest productivity and GVA levels in the area, and both are falling – by -11.6% and -4.1% respectively, as well as the lowest earnings in the area. The highest productivity levels are driven by manufacturing and in Peterborough and Huntingdonshire¹³.

Strong productivity and GVA performance in Peterborough is not following through to wages for residents. There is **large disparity in residents' earnings across the area**: Peterborough (with Fenland) has the lowest average earnings in the area, at £23,973 compared with £31,673 in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire¹⁴. The impact of lower skill levels in places such as Fenland means that communities are struggling to benefit from the region's growth, threatening future opportunities.

Employment levels across the area are slightly higher than national average at 76% compared with 75%, but levels have fallen in Fenland, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire. Employment in innovation-based growth sectors is rising faster in the area than average at 17.4% compared with 6.6% nationally. However, the **positive growth in these sectors is not experienced evenly across the area** – with priority sectors clustering in specific places, for example, advanced manufacturing in Peterborough, Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, and life sciences in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.

In Peterborough and the Fens, efforts to create new jobs in the area are intrinsically linked to efforts to raise local skill levels. **Providing a place's residents with access to higher-level skills ultimately has little or no effect on productivity or addressing local levelling up challenges without also stimulating the supply of higher value, good quality jobs** for those residents to go into.

Despite progress in recent years, skilled residents in Peterborough and Fenland still have limited job opportunities available to them in the local area. The current reality is that Peterborough and surrounding areas are deprived places, where low skills levels have historically limited wages, progression and quality of life.

One way to provide good quality jobs in a place is to support an innovation ecosystem to develop. The innovation ecosystem utilises a knowledge engine, such as a university or Research Institute, to produce new research which is then disseminated through the ecosystem¹⁵. Local businesses which are part of the innovation ecosystem can apply the research to their own processes or to customer solutions, raising local innovative activity, and with it, demand for workers with higher-level skills. The resulting effect is to create more higher-value jobs in a place through inward investment and business growth, which

¹³ Metro Dynamics analysis of ONS data (2019).

¹⁴ Metro Dynamics analysis of ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) data (2020).

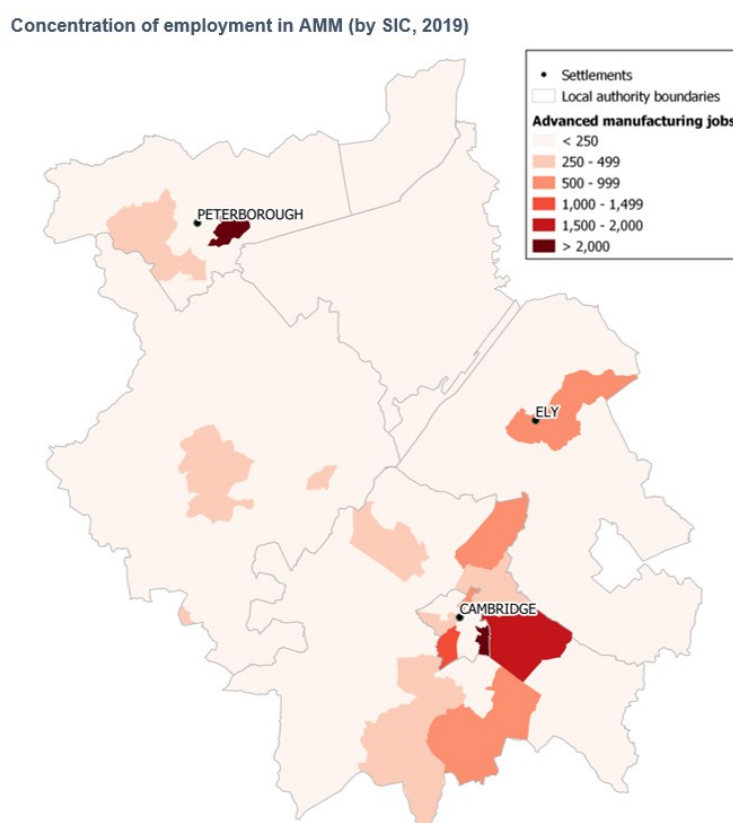
¹⁵ See Metro Dynamics' report 'Place Matters' for a detailed description of this process

are filled by higher-skilled residents, ultimately leading to increased productivity and levelling up.

The region has been held back by a fragmented innovation ecosystem. To take part in or benefit from knowledge intensive growth, residents need local access to relevant education pathways, aligned to available, high quality jobs. Without both the learning pathway and an employment opportunity, residents will miss out on the benefits of growth.

The CPIER identified the needs for enhanced infrastructure to support innovation, which is being delivered on through the development of ARU Peterborough. Expanding the reach of University of Cambridge and research assets in the south of the area will also be a key part of this. The below map shows through the example of concentrations in advanced manufacturing, the opportunity for progressing innovation in these areas. This requires intervening strategically to **concurrently raise local skill levels, local demand for skilled workers and create new jobs.**

Figure 11. Concentration of employment in advanced manufacturing¹⁶



¹⁶ Metro Dynamics analysis for CPCA, *Covid-19 Labour Market Implications for Priority Sectors*, February 2021.

The largest employed workforces proportionate to population in the area are in Huntingdonshire and East Cambridgeshire, where earnings are above average levels – offering opportunities and quality of life. **Clusters of employment in CPCA priority sectors are growing** in life sciences in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge, advanced manufacturing and digital in Peterborough and Cambridge, and agritech in Huntingdonshire, East Cambridgeshire and Fenland. This provides opportunities for residents to benefit from growth with the right skills provision and support. However, priority sectors account for only 20% of total employment, and the CPCA Local Economic Recovery Strategy emphasises additional focus on the hardest hit foundational sectors that make up the bulk of employment.

High levels of self-employment in Fenland point to a strong entrepreneurial culture, but this is the only place that has more people self-employed than employed in a sector prioritised for innovation based growth. Fenland's self-employment rate is the only place above national average at 18.7% compared with 13%. This with low overall earnings in Fenland indicates limited employment opportunities. Fenland, Peterborough and Huntingdonshire all have lower recent increases in employment levels, closer to (or lower than) the national average than the CPCA average, with much sharper increases in self-employment.

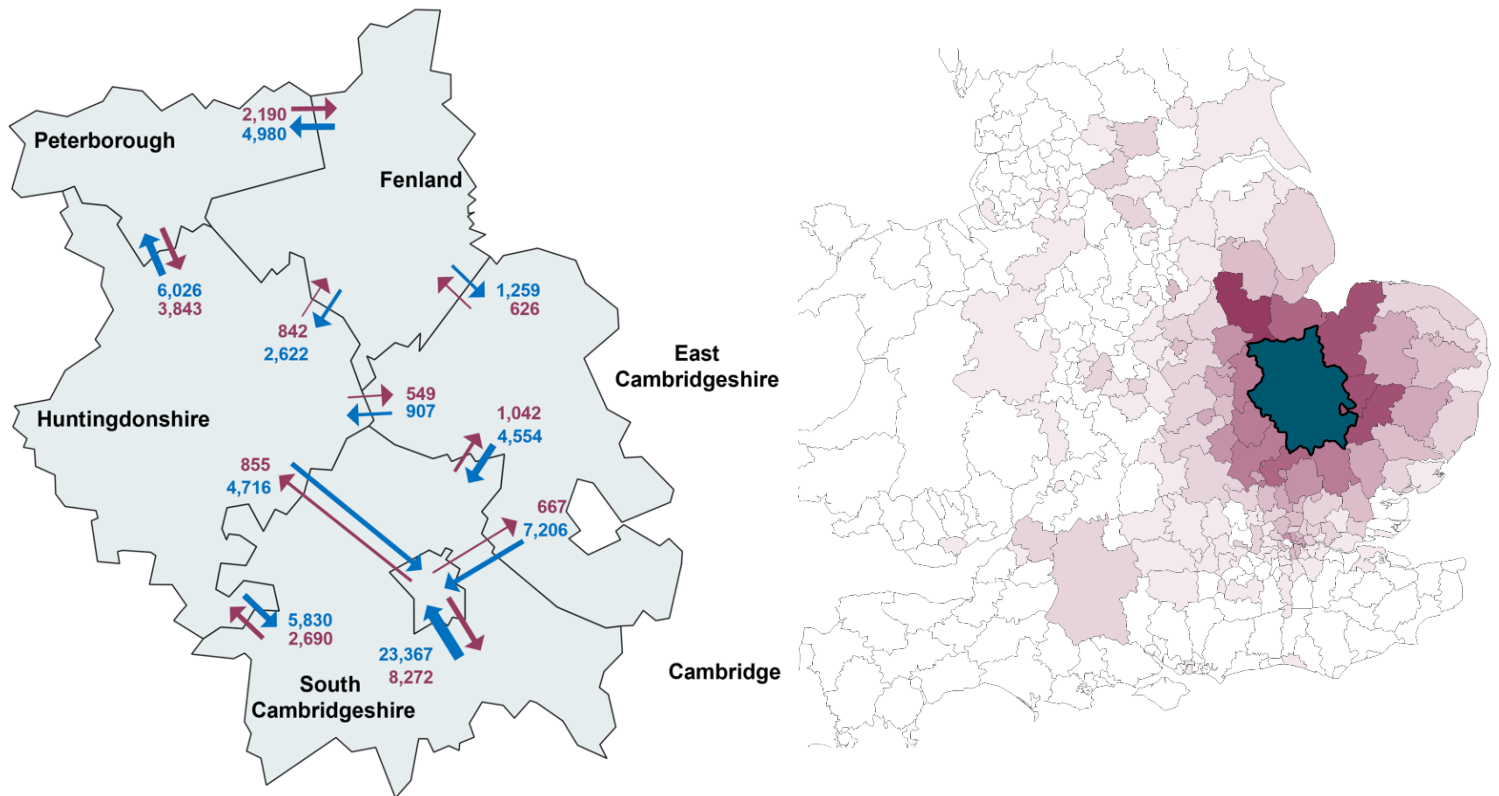
This indicates **barriers into work, including lower jobs density levels and reinforces the importance of job creation, as well as training, as an important component of up-skilling in some areas.** Fenland has the lowest jobs density at 0.68, and East Cambridgeshire at 0.74 and Huntingdonshire at 0.83 have lower jobs density than the national average of 0.87. Peterborough, Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire's jobs density is higher than average, and Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire's levels are above 1, meaning there are more jobs available than working age populations.

Travel to work flows show on the following map to the left net inflows to Peterborough and Cambridge, and net outflows from Fenland, East Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. (This data should be caveated that it is based on 2011 census data but demonstrates long-term trends). Fenland in particular is not well connected to jobs clustering in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, reducing access to opportunities.

The below map to the right also shows that commuting out of the CPCA area is concentrated in the surrounding areas, with links into London and other major cities, but particularly to the North and east of Peterborough, Fenland, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire, into Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

This suggests two priorities – connecting people to places where jobs are concentrated, and creating good jobs where connectivity is more limited.

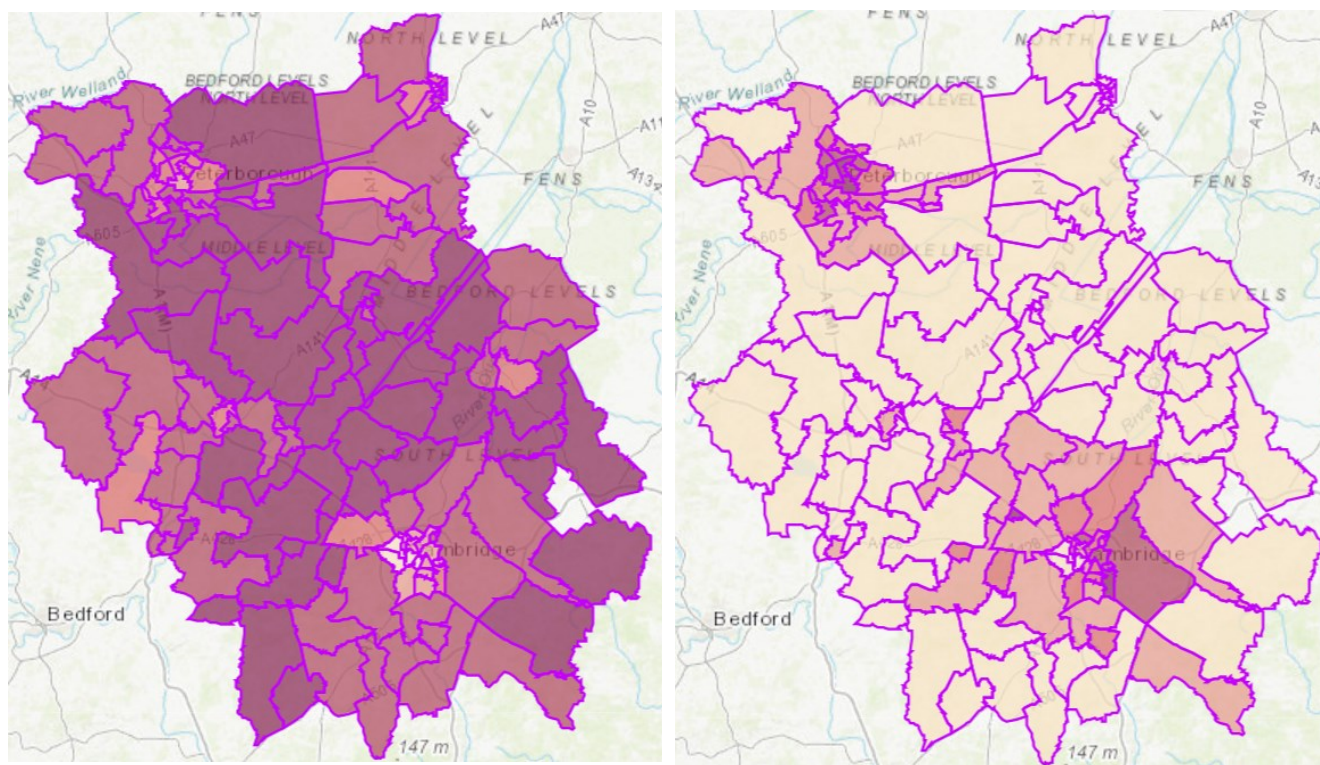
Figure 12. Travel to work flows across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and to surrounding areas (2011 census data)¹⁷



Connectivity challenges across the area are illustrated by the below maps, contrasting the proportion of people who travel to work by car or van with the proportion who travel by bus. Bus connectivity into and around Cambridge appears to be wider than around Peterborough, with real cold spots in Fenland, East Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. The developing CPCA Local Transport and Connectivity Plan aims to address specific local priorities to support the labour market, better connecting people to work and learning.

¹⁷ Metro Dynamics analysis of Travel To Work Census Data (2011).

Figure 13. Proportion of people who travel to work by car or van (left) compared with by bus (right) (2011 census data)¹⁸



Across the area, **population growth is outstripping jobs growth**, with a recent -4.8% fall in employment levels against a 0.7% rise in working age population, indicating further future issues in residents finding job opportunities – particularly in Fenland¹⁹. Creating and growing good jobs across the area, sectors and businesses will be a priority for the CPCA Economic Growth Strategy.

Providers and place leaders experience inconsistent articulation of skills needs from employers, and there has been a narrow strategic focus on higher level skills and sector level strategies for CPCA’s innovation-based growth sectors. Employers experience a lack of access to information on labour availability locally and up to date intelligence on content of skills provision locally. Further **information and collaboration on recruitment and skills needs as well as provision** could be better joined up between employers and providers – including longer-term trends affecting skills demand in future. This would build on the ongoing Growth Works programme, and making the most of Cambridge Ahead and Opportunity Peterborough networks.

The area is starting to fall behind the national average on higher level skills. The proportion of the working age population qualified up to level 3 is rising at 2.3% compared with a fall of 0.1% nationally. This could be positive, however, the proportion of people

¹⁸ Cambridgeshire Insights method of travel analysis

¹⁹ Metro Dynamics analysis of ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) data (2020).

whose highest qualification is a level 2 is also rising against a national fall, and qualifications at level 4+ are growing more slowly than average.

Currently levels of higher skills are in line with the rest of the UK at 43% of the working age population qualified at level 4+, but this rate is growing more slowly than average, and there is large variation between places. Rates range from 60% of the working population in Cambridge to 27% in Fenland. Rates are rising fastest in Huntingdonshire at 6.7%. But in Fenland, Cambridge and East Cambridgeshire, rates are falling²⁰.

The occupational structure varies significantly across the area. In Cambridge, 53% of residents are working in occupations at skill level 4 (jobs which typically require a degree or equivalent period of relevant work experience), compared with just 14% in Fenland and with 31% nationally. All areas have lower than average rates of level 3 workers. In Huntingdonshire, Fenland, Peterborough and East Cambridgeshire, around 32% of the workforce is employed in level 2 roles (in line with national averages). Fenland and Peterborough have much higher than average level 1 workers – at 18.3% and 17% respectively compared with 9.2% nationally. Levels reflect the five highest employing occupations across the area: sales and retail assistants, administrative occupations, care workers and home carers, elementary storage occupations, and nurses²¹.

Across the area, the main skills gaps are in mid-level, skilled roles, those which require strong work-related and/or technical training. Considering these skills needs, the lower occupational levels, and fall in employment levels, in places such as Fenland, **a drive for increasing higher level skills alone will not address barriers facing residents and the structure of jobs and businesses**²². There needs to also be a focus on growing local businesses, and creating and attracting new jobs to the area, particularly considering the higher likelihood of school leavers entering work rather than continuing education, as seen above.

Life-wide and lifelong learning and training

With an ageing society, **people will be working for longer and changing jobs more throughout their careers**. This reflects the need for 'life-wide' learning as well as 'lifelong', as careers are becoming less and less linear, with people having a portfolio of jobs and experience throughout their lives. Life-wide also reflects the ability for people to pursue learning in the community and through life experiences outside of direct job-related, or formally delivered training.

This with changes facing the economy in the coming years will require a skills system that can respond to local employer needs, and individuals' ambitions and individual technical and soft skill gaps. Currently, access to careers guidance and advice beyond an educational setting is lacking.

²⁰ Metro Dynamics analysis of ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) data (2020).

²¹ Metro Dynamics analysis of ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) data (2020).

²² Metro Dynamics analysis of DfE Employer Skills Survey (ESS) data (2019).

Enhanced **life-wide and community learning**, and personal development not specifically related to work, provided in a community setting would support this. In 2019/20, 17% of CPCA Adult Education Budget spending was allocated to community learning²³, and the CA aims in the upcoming commissioning period to allocate 20% of funding to community learning.

Transitions between jobs, employers, occupations and roles will become more important as driving trends play out in the local economy. Industry 4.0 and automation, potentially accelerated by labour shortages currently being experienced from the effects of Covid-19 and Brexit, are expected to impact priority sectors in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Agritech has the highest exposure to automation at 49% of employment exposed, with 43.9% of employment not overlapping with other priority sectors. Advanced manufacturing faces 39% of employment exposure, with 33% for digital and 31% for life sciences. These four sectors also have more overlapping occupations in other sectors, ranging from 74.2% to 79.9%²⁴. Reskilling will be a clear challenge in the coming years, particularly in areas with concentrations of agriculture and manufacturing.

As we transition to net zero with national targets set by 2050, and with CPCA committing its own operations to becoming net zero by 2030, **skills and recruitment needs will grow in order to decarbonise sectors.** There are differences between places in the upskilling need to create green jobs. A concern is that those places with the most significant education-access cold spots also have the potential to require the most green upskilling.

Figure 14. Proportion of jobs that will require upskilling to become green jobs²⁵

	% of jobs requiring upskilling
Great Britain	10.6%
CPCA	10.7%
Fenland	13%
East Cambridgeshire	12%
Huntingdonshire	12%
South Cambridgeshire	12%
Peterborough	11%
Cambridge	7%

²³ CPCA, Evaluation of Adult Education Budget (2020).

²⁴ Metro Dynamics analysis for CPCA, *Covid-19 Labour Market Implications for Priority Sectors*, February 2021.

²⁵ PCAN, LSE, University of Leeds, Just Transition Jobs Tracker (2021).

Higher workplace training rates in Peterborough and Fenland (with 25.4% and 27.8% reporting receiving training in the last quarter, compared with 11.9% in Cambridge) demonstrate that residents can, and do, access up to date work experience and skills – including digital, technical and soft skills - at work²⁶. However, linked to lower progression from school into FE, HE, and apprenticeships, this also signals that **pre-work education is leaving residents in these places with gaps in job related, technical, and/or soft skills that employers need, and there is a lack of range in the offer of work-related training from providers**. The CPCA's Adult Education Budget can therefore play a key role in work-related training based on employer needs.

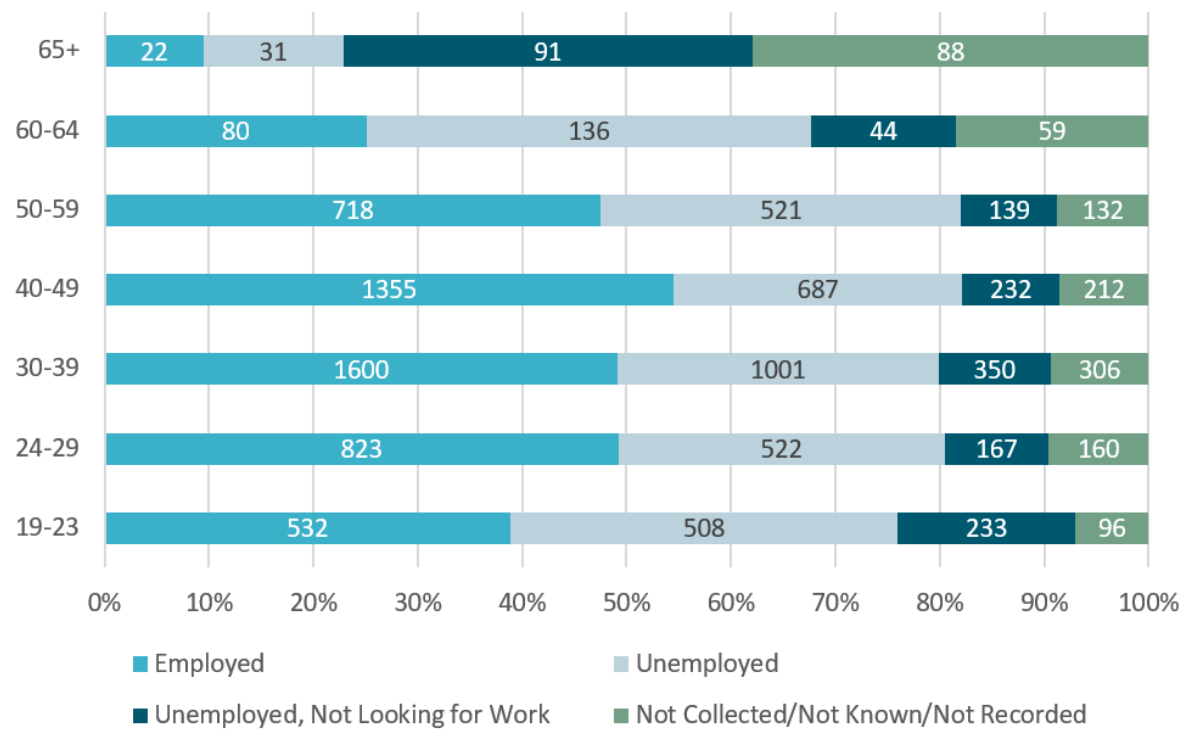
Learner participation in courses funded by CPCA's Adult Education Budget grew from the first year of devolution in 2019/20, from 8,421 to 9,097, this is despite the disruption to learning caused by Covid-19. Courses with the most enrolments in 2020/2021 so far are health, public services and care; preparation for life and work; and information and communication technology.

Of 14,067 enrolments in 2019/20 (some students enrolled more than once), almost half were in preparation for life and work, while another quarter are in health, public services and care. Peterborough accounts for almost half of all enrolments at 6,720, with the remainder of enrolments spread across the other districts.

As cohorts age, learners are increasingly likely to be employed at the time of their enrolment, up until cohorts aged 50+, when the likelihood of being employed at the time of enrolment begins to decrease. Older cohorts also tend to have higher prior education attainment levels, although it should be noted that in older age groups the proportion of 'unknown/missing' attainment levels increases, making it hard to confirm a trend.

²⁶ Metro Dynamics analysis of ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) data (2020).

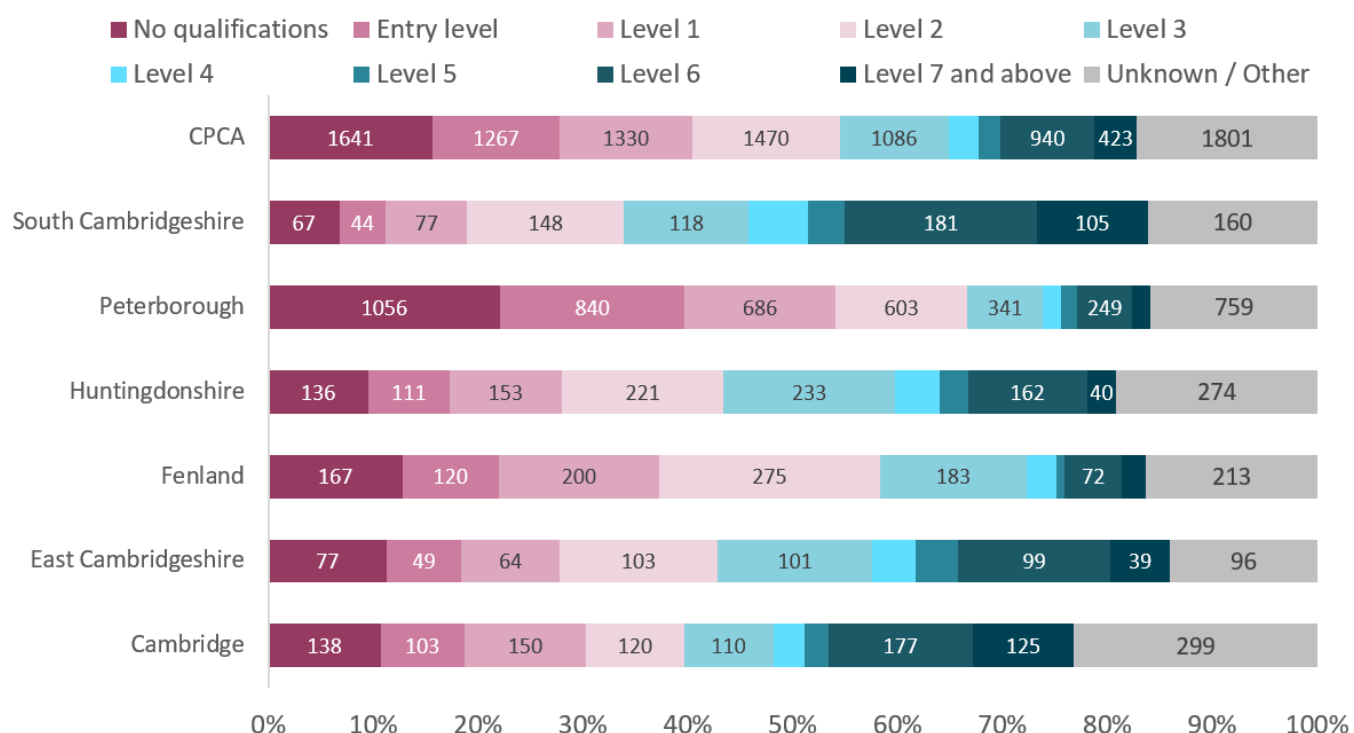
Figure 15. Prior employment status of CPCA AEB learners by age group (2019/20)



Across the area, 55% of learners who enrolled in AEB courses had level 2 or below prior education levels, including 15% of learners with no qualifications at all. Again, this varies by place: only in Fenland and Peterborough do the proportions exceed half of enrolments, at around 60% and 65% respectively. Across other districts, more learners start at higher prior attainment levels²⁷.

²⁷ Metro Dynamics analysis for CPCA, *Covid-19 Labour Market Implications for Priority Sectors*, February 2021.

Figure 16. Prior education attainment levels of CPCA AEB learners by age group (2019/20)



There are barriers to people being able to take up the skills provision currently available for adults. This is important in an area with rural communities, where transport and digital connectivity remain major barriers to learning for many, combined with other health, financial, childcare, and mental health barriers that people in more deprived and isolated communities face.

Inflexibility and length of courses, with a **focus on qualifications rather than agile skills provision**, also presents a barrier to entry for people who may have particular job relevant upskilling or reskilling needs, but without the need, financial resources or time to pursue further formal qualifications.

Support into and between work

Sustained support is required for people experiencing multiple and complex barriers to education and labour market entry. Current support being provided through European Social Fund (ESF) funded projects alongside Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) programmes will need to continue in a new funding landscape. However, there will also be a need to support people into and between work who are not picked up by the DWP system.

Covid-19 has triggered significant increases in Universal Credit and Jobseekers Allowance claimants, weakening the past strength of the area having below average levels of claimants. Claimants (JSA and UC) has risen by 96%, affecting 4.2% of the working age

population, compared with 5.3% nationally between March 2020 and August 2021²⁸. Continuing close working with DWP, DfE and partners will be important to maximise the impact of Kickstart, Restart, Digital Skills Bootcamps, the health and care sector work academy, traineeships, and the Lifetime Skills Guarantee.

Economic inactivity has risen by 19.7% compared with a fall nationally of -4.4% during the pandemic, so rates are about in line with national averages at 21%. The rate for students is higher in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough at 34% compared with 26.8% nationally. This is far more pronounced in certain places, with a very large rise in students in Huntingdonshire of 417.6% and South Cambridgeshire of 134.9%, compared with a fall of -21.1% in East Cambridgeshire and -1.8% in Peterborough²⁹. In response to the rise in inactivity, a priority area will be supporting people into work from study and back into work for those who have left the labour market. Supporting employers with job creation and matching in communities will also be key.

Many of the jobs hit hardest by Covid-19 are often held by young people. As seen above, pre-pandemic, the proportion of school leavers at 18 progressing into an unstained destination were below average in every place except Peterborough and Fenland, with rates of 15.3% and 13.9% respectively compared with 13.3% nationally³⁰. However, **the rate of NEETs (young people not in education, employment or training) across the area in 2021 is low**, at 2.5% across Cambridgeshire, and 4.3% in Peterborough, compared with 9.3% across the UK³¹. A new NEET strategy has been developed for the area, which will have targeted measures to continue to reduce the NEET population.

Overall economic inactivity and unemployment levels have moved closer to national averages, indicating inequality and gaps in people having the experience, exposure and opportunities – from providers and employers – to lead their own learning and career development. It is hard to predict the extent to which these patterns will hold, as recovery continues and the area moves to a ‘rebound’ position. However temporal, this has been a significant change from the norm in the area, the impacts of which must be addressed and future recurrence mitigated for.

²⁸ Metro Dynamics analysis of ONS claimant data (2021).

²⁹ Metro Dynamics analysis of ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) data (2020).

³⁰ Metro Dynamics analysis of DfE school leaver destinations data (2019).

³¹ CPCA NEETs data (2021).

3 Where we want to be

Pre-existing priorities

CPCA's 2019 Skills Strategy was underpinned by the findings of the CPIER and aligned with the aims of the 2019 Local Industry Strategy (LIS), which sets out how Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will maximise the economy's strengths and remove barriers that remain to ensure the economy is fit for tomorrow's world. It supports the aims of the National Industrial Strategy by boosting productivity in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Figure 17. CPCA 2019 Skills Strategy in summary

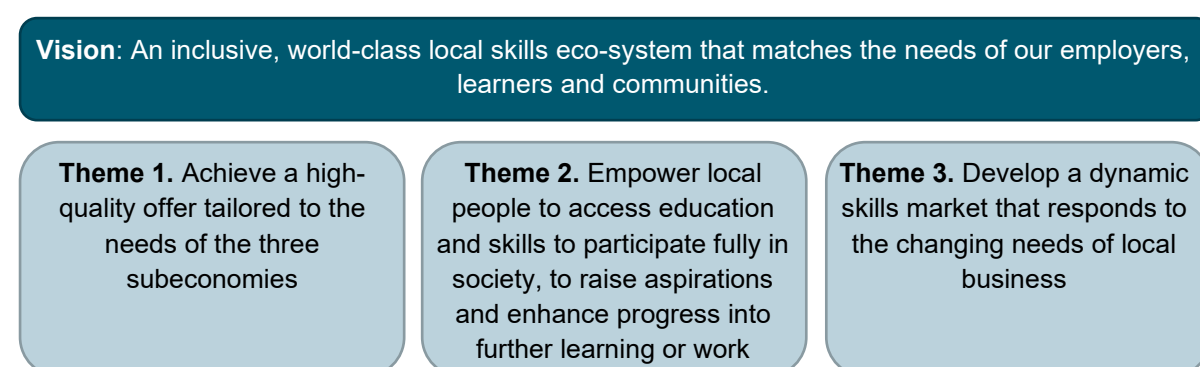
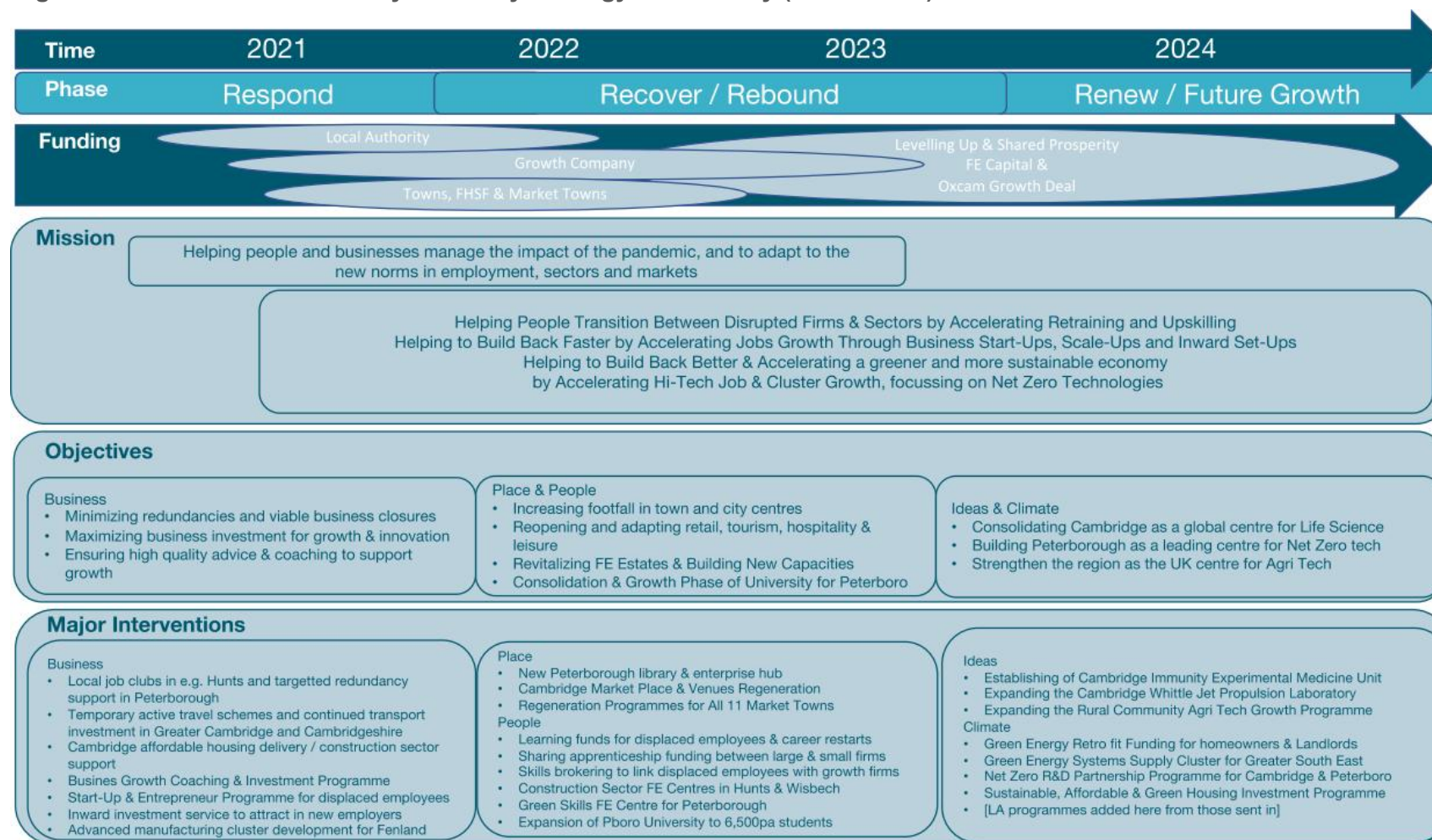


Figure 18. CPCA 2019 Local Industrial Strategy in summary

People	Ideas	Business	Infrastructure
Through local collaboration and strong leadership, deliver a fair and inclusive economy by empowering local people to access the education and skills needed to meet the needs of the local economy and business, both now and in the future	Ensuring that the area's economic base grows by harnessing innovation, enhancing Cambridge's position nationally and globally, especially around life science, AI and data technologies, whilst bringing innovation-based growth to Peterborough and the Fens too	Accelerating and sustaining higher levels of business growth in start-ups and scale-ups, whilst attracting new and more knowledge intensive firms to our economy, to drive both growth and productivity	Enhancing the current transport and housing infrastructure that is hampering growth in the south, whilst investing in commercial infrastructure to bring inclusive growth to the north
Place Tailoring interventions to meet the needs of our cities and districts at local level			

The area's Local Economic Recovery Strategy (LERS) set out how CPCA will accelerate the recovery, rebound and renewal of the economy, helping people affected, and achieving the ambition to double GVA by 2042 in a digitally enabled, greener, healthier and more inclusive way.

Figure 19. CPCA Local Economy Recovery Strategy in summary (March 2021)



As noted in the introduction, few would question the ongoing relevance of the mission at the core of *Developing Talent* and the LERS, and many good things have been achieved through the actions flowing from it, as shown below. However, there is also still work to do.

Figure 20. Progress on 2019 Skills Strategy actions

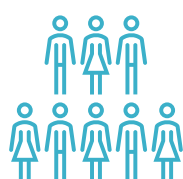
2019 Strategy action	Progress
Opportunity Area to improve education in Fenland and East Cambridgeshire	<i>In progress</i> – received additional year of funding from DfE – want to make more progress on skills and market towns
Skills brokerage service and strong early engagement between businesses and providers including in careers advice with targeted support on STEM, T Levels, employer outreach, work readiness and careers pilots	<i>Achieving</i> – skills brokerage service launched in February 2021 as part of Growth Works
Apprenticeship Levy pooling to improve access for SMEs, and provide placements through sector academy apprenticeship hubs across the area	<i>Achieving</i> – apprenticeship Levy pooling mechanism in place, CPCA Skills, Training, Apprenticeship and Recruitment Hub in place
Connect local businesses in key sectors to the Digital Talent Portal for greater visibility of talent for employers and attracting young people to jobs through social media	<i>Achieving</i> – digital talent portal launched as part of Growth Works
Health and care sector work academy – 2,100 new learners	<i>In progress</i> – lower levels of uptake so far than expected – the project has been reprofiled with DWP to run to 2023
University for Peterborough that raises HE participation and aspiration, and delivers technical courses aligned to local employers’ needs and jobs of the future	<i>In progress</i> – ARU Peterborough in development and on track to open in 2022, awaiting outcomes
Work and Health Programme to support progression of adults into work who have become disconnected from the labour market	<i>Achieving</i> – DWP Restart contract with Reed replaced Work and Health Programme to operate over next 3 years
Achieve a skills base that matches business needs through funding and programmes that CPCA has responsibility for – map AEB provision and improve provision through transition pilots and sector focused retraining schemes	<i>In progress</i> – sector retraining schemes launched in 2020, AEB progressing – fewer learners in 2020 than 2019 due to Covid-19
Lobby Government for further devolution opportunities and to shape skills reforms to make an outcomes based and business led skills system	<i>In progress</i> – further lobbying on further devolution and local control of funding for skills, including National Careers Service and Careers and Enterprise Company activity
Sector pilots and skills hubs to overcome rurality with transport links	<i>In progress</i> – Chatteris hub in development

An updated vision

Building on the ambition for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough set out in the 2019 Skills Strategy, the updated vision to unlock potential for all across the area is for:

A successful, globally competitive economy offering high-skilled, well-paid, good quality jobs, delivering increased productivity and prosperity to support strong, sustainable and healthy communities and enabled by an inclusive, world-class local skills system that matches the needs of our employers, learners and communities.

Going further than the 2019 Strategy, this document also sets out what this vision means for each of the groups interacting with the skills system: people, employers, providers and place leaders:



People experience fulfilment and good physical and mental health with productive, quality working lives. They drive their own learning and career journeys and feel confident to enter and re-enter the labour market over the course of their lives. They can access support and learning to meet their personal and work ambitions when and how they need.



Employers are providing good quality jobs; have the skills they need in their staff and can recruit the right person for the right job. They understand their skills needs and their inputs shape an agile, responsive skills system that delivers a regional pipeline of talent, matched to job opportunities to support strong businesses and enable business growth.



Providers work collaboratively across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in an integrated education and skills system to deliver learning, qualifications, careers education and support to enable people to enter the labour market in the ways that suit individual's needs and ambitions.

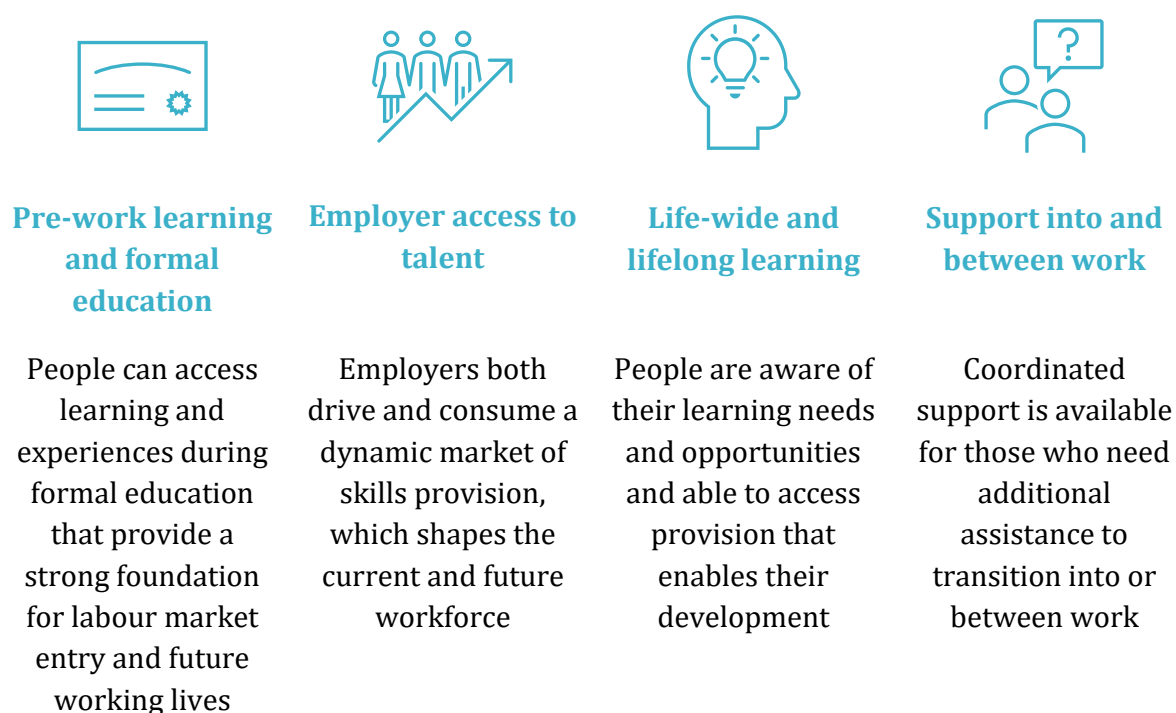


Place leaders secure outcomes for the whole place, convening and supporting collaboration between employers and the integrated skills system, as well as linking into other local services for people across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to lead healthy lives and fulfilling careers.

These vision statements may read as common sense, but the system across the area struggles (and has historically struggled) to deliver these experiences. There is more that can be done so that people are universally drivers of their own personal development, learning and careers journeys, and can access the support they need, so that employers can get the skills they need for their staff, so that providers work collaboratively across our area, and so that the Combined Authority and place leaders empower, enable and convene. More, and more effective, collaboration between all parties in the system is critical to achieving this as the status quo in the future.

The updated vision also defines new themes on which to focus our strategy. These reflect the four areas where residents and employers can benefit most from an ambitious skills system that supports the development of life and work skills, and through which the area grows a strong and inclusive labour market.





Figure 21. Core themes for employment and skills



Whilst the detail of the action required to ensure these elements are in place will evolve as time passes and the context changes, these themes should remain stable, setting the direction *and* providing a reference point to maintain course.









To guide action under each of these themes a set of long-term outcomes has been identified. Set out on the following page, these outcomes will steer the work of partners across the area in achieving the vision and enabling people, employers, providers and place leaders to experience the skills system in this way.

Figure 22. Long-term outcomes

<p>Pre-work learning and formal education</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People understand how their ambitions can be realised through learning and training and are connected to opportunities, experiences and role models. • Providers have increased numbers of students taking courses and apprenticeships aligned both to local job opportunities and their interests and ambitions. • Providers are outcomes driven, progressing learners into and between jobs and careers with the skills – from basic employability to soft skills, to technical capabilities that employers need. • The skills system enables social mobility through equal access to career advice, education, skills, and employment opportunities. 	<p>Employer access to talent</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers can access a pipeline of skilled people seeking to move into the workforce and the right skills development training for their current staff. • Employers can easily access – physically and digitally - and navigate support to adapt their workforce planning in response to structural changes in the economy. • Employers can and do articulate their skills needs both in terms of long-term workforce planning/strategy (skills for which they have consistent/repeating demand over time) and short-term workforce demand (skills which for which they have an immediate, unmet need). • Employers have well defined and designed jobs, for which the skills requirements and development prospects are clear to staff and candidates. • Providers collectively plan, design and deliver learning and training provision responding to employers' long-term needs and can respond with agility to short-term demand.
<p>Life-wide learning and training</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are drivers of their own learning and work journey, making informed decisions about the selection of training, development and work activities that are right for them. • People are equipped with the soft and technical skills to respond to opportunities in the labour market and see clear pathways into and between a variety of occupations and careers. • People can access - physically and digitally – and navigate an agile and responsive skills system to upskill and reskill throughout their careers. • Providers are outcomes driven, progressing learners into and between jobs and careers with the skills – from basic employability to soft skills, to technical capabilities that employers need. 	<p>Support into and between work</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can access support into education and employment how and when they need it, at any point in their lives and whatever their starting point. • Place leaders collectively reduce barriers – health, mental health, digital and connectivity – for people to access learning, training and employment.

CPCA will hold itself and partners to account to these outcomes with clear set of progress indicators, working as a set of measures cutting across our groups and themes:

Figure 23. Progress measures

Group	Indicator	Pre-work learning and formal education 	Employer access to talent 	Life-wide and lifelong learning 	Support into and between work 
People 	Economic activity (increasing)				✓
	Low or no qualifications (decreasing)	✓	✓	✓	
	In work universal credit (decreasing)				✓
Employers 	Median wages (increasing)		✓	✓	
	GVA and productivity (increasing)		✓		
	Skilled jobs (increasing)		✓		
Providers 	Participation rates (increasing)	✓		✓	
	Progression at 18 into FE, Vocational and HE (increasing)	✓			
	Skill levels (increasing)	✓	✓	✓	
Place Leaders 	Employment levels (increasing)		✓		✓
	Economic inactivity (decreasing)				✓
	Travel to work and learn times (improving)	✓		✓	✓

4 How we will get there

Setting a direction

This vision for the skills system is a long-term project. The starting point is ensuring that short-term strategic priorities are approached as a step in the right direction towards longer-term change.

In order to deliver on short-term priorities, CPCA will set strategic delivery plans with five-year terms that will form part of the wider Business and Skills Strategy. CPCA will develop and agree with partners detailed action plans, addressing short-term priorities and objectives that will move forward the process of delivering the long-term vision. Progress on these will be monitored and priorities calibrated prior to setting out a subsequent strategic plan.

The detail of the strategic action plans will be developed with partners across the area, to agree respective roles and responsibilities in delivery. These action plans will need to take into account:

- **Things already in motion** - activities/interventions which are funded, approved and are either already being delivered or which will be delivered over the next five years.
- **Things needed in the future** - activities/interventions which are needed to underpin longer term and future development/growth, for which additional exploration, investment and potentially system change will be required.

Actions needed in the future can be achieved through a number of mechanisms:

- Making use of existing structures in order to deliver new projects/programmes. For example, directing the devolved Adult Education Budget, expanding the CPCA Growth Works programme, and delivering ongoing programmes with partners such as Sector Based Work Academies and Restart. This may also include forming new sector groups, or modifying place-based structures that sprang up in response to Covid-19.
- Bidding into upcoming funding opportunities and making the case for devolved control to the Combined Authority – importantly the Levelling Up Fund (LUF), UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), and the National Careers Service, as well as integrating new activity into projects currently being developed, such as ARU Peterborough.

Together partners across the area also need to start preparing the ground now for some bigger change projects that the vision and outcomes call for. Some of these can be contributed to by shorter-term projects, but they will need further scoping and iterative development to ensure all partners and stakeholders are brought along the change journey.

Linking to national policies and strategies

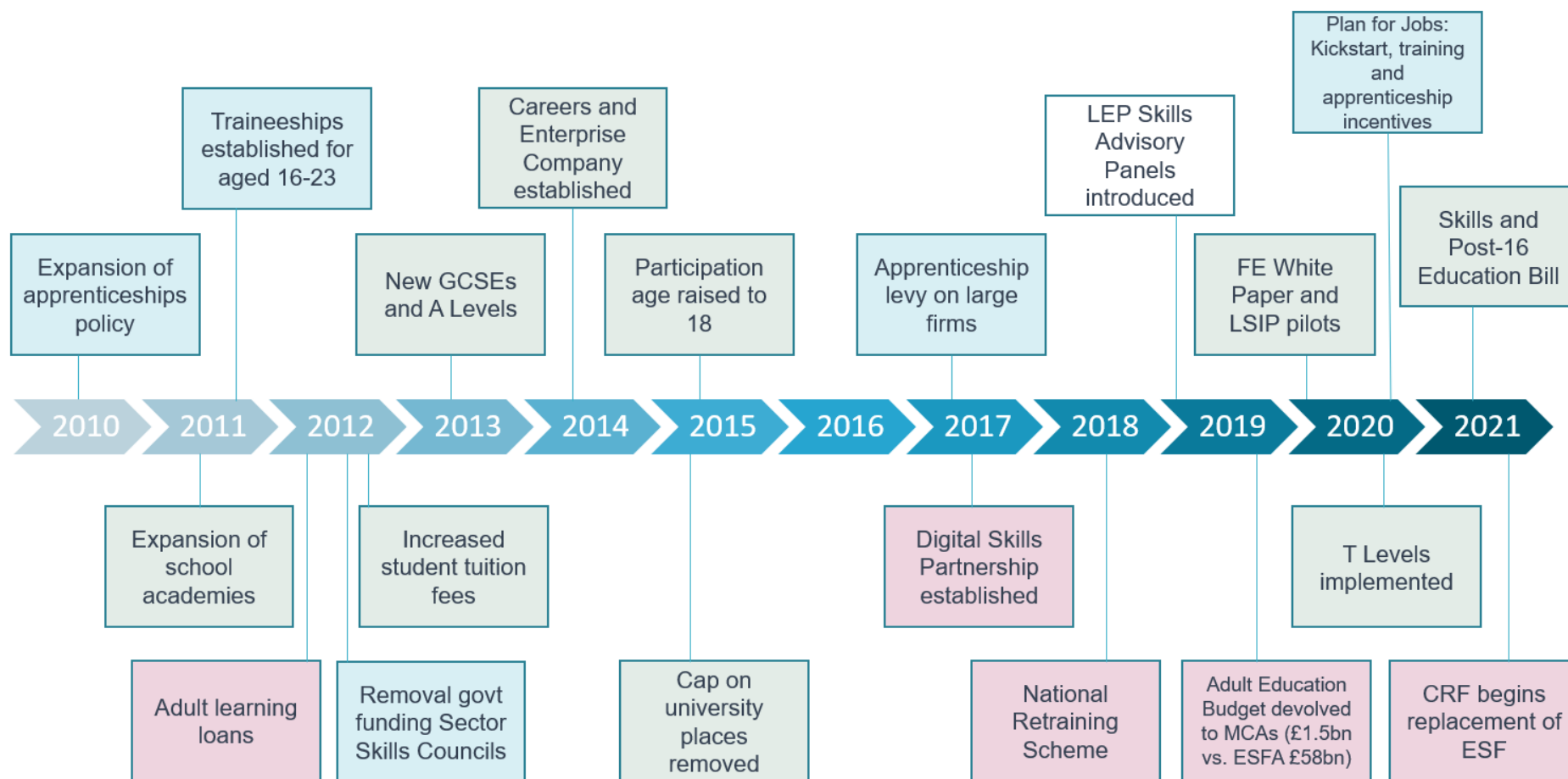
A number of Government policies and strategies are directly relevant to the strategic priorities in this skills strategy and will shape the future of funding and devolution through which it will be delivered. Partners across the area must work together to ensure these are leveraged optimally for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Skills is a busy policy landscape. As shown in the timeline over the page, the last 10 years have seen a succession of re-shaping policies. The period has also seen legislative change, in 2017 both the Technical and Further Education Act and the Higher Education and Research Act brought the most significant changes for decades. As this Strategy is written, the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill is passing through Parliament.

In the short-term, the following strategies will be key to shaping the local response:

- **HMT's Plan for Jobs (2020)** brought together labour market support programmes delivered through DWP and DfE – Kickstart, Restart, apprenticeship and traineeship incentives, Lifetime Skills Guarantee. This focuses on supporting jobs with direct help for individuals to find work and upskill, protecting jobs in those sectors hit hardest by the pandemic, and creating jobs and training opportunities.
- **HMT's Plan for Growth (March 2021)** sets out the vision for 'building back better' through pillars of infrastructure, skills and innovation as key to the UK's recovery from Covid-19. The Government wishes to improve productivity and level-up the UK whilst increasing high-quality skills provision and training, and transforming FE. This will in part catalyse the development of creative ideas and technologies that will shape the UK's future high-growth.
- **The connected Innovation Strategy (September 2021) and Net Zero Strategy (October 2021)**, aims at boosting Britain's role as a including proposals to make the UK a Scientific Superpower and including policies to boost renewable energy production and heating, power and transport innovation.
- **DfE's Skills for Jobs White Paper (2021)** set out current legislative reforms in technical education that is currently being passed into legislation through the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill. Focusing on skills gaps at higher technical levels that risk the UK falling behind its global competitors, reform aims to transform the skills system to put employers at the heart of the system and to make training a lifelong and flexible option for all.
- **A Levelling Up and Devolution White Paper** is anticipated from Government, setting out its approach to developing growth in places and further plans for devolved powers and funding in England. This is against the backdrop of expected decisions on future growth and skills funding through the UKSPF.





Figure 24. Key national skills policy developments 2010-2021



Short-term priorities

Focus now and in the first five years will be on the following short-term priorities:

Figure 25. Short-term priorities

<p>Pre-work learning and formal education</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving careers education, specifically around STEM and green skills, as well as information, advice and guidance • Widening education access and participation to make education more inclusive and the student body (and future workforce) more diverse • Enhancing exposure to role models, work experience, and understanding of various training routes into sectors and occupations • Capital investment to improve teaching facilities and kit, particularly for providers of FE, alongside support for staff capacity building
<p>Employer access to talent</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Covid-19 recovery, growth and net zero transition by developing priority skills and responding to acute issues • Driving up and sustaining employers' engagement with and influence on education and training • Embedding modern work practices and conditions and improving job quality
<p>Life-wide and lifelong learning</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving access to careers information, advice and guidance at any age • Providing support to upskill and reskill in response to economic restructuring (e.g. following Covid-19, Brexit, further digitisation, as net zero transition intensifies) • Increasing work-based learning, particularly apprenticeships, and introducing more accessible formats (e.g. short courses/ online/blended learning). • Ensuring inclusion in continued and community learning and support for disadvantaged people, adults with SEN, care leavers and ex-offenders
<p>Support into and between work</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting unemployed and NEETs into training and employment • Providing support for disadvantaged groups to access the labour market • Targeting support for Covid-19 recovery and transitions for displaced workers

The CA's role in delivering this is as a place leader with partners, and convener of skills provision across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It will continue to expand its delivery and direction of adult skills programmes, support partners to overcome barriers and improve place outcomes for our residents, and make the case for expanded devolution of economic growth funding and flexibilities. In the immediate term, the CA will focus on:

- **Developing growth in jobs** – focused on business, GVA, productivity and jobs growth at least at level 3 in Peterborough and Fenland, and at level 4+ focusing on priority sectors across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- **Supporting people into growing, changing and new jobs** – throughout people's lives – from creating strong pathways post-18 to utilising Life Long Skills Guarantee and entitlements – with higher level skills that employers need. In line with Government's Skills White Paper, this means including employers in shaping the system.
- **Co-designing with stakeholders and place leaders an agile skills system** for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, with a regional curriculum, and enabling support through our Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and infrastructure and digital investment.

The CA will also lead the way on establishing three linked longer-term change projects that are critical to ensuring our skills system can truly meet the needs of our local communities:

1. **A regional curriculum enabling strategic collaboration across providers, with learning and training aligned to local job opportunities and careers** – using robust data and information from employers to inform the experiences, skills development and qualifications that school, college and university students need for local job opportunities and careers.
2. **A dual-track system, anticipating long-term needs and responding with agility in the short-term** – with providers who can *both* lead on future workforce development to provide a pipeline of talent and respond to short term skills needs from industry.
3. **A coordinated place-based action framework, to engage all stakeholders in addressing multiple/complex issues** – convening place leaders, providers, schools and partners to focus on improving skill and qualification levels and getting people into good jobs and to achieve higher earnings.

These three projects will ensure **effective** provision is delivered using an **agile** approach, in a way suited to the nuances of **our places**.

Cutting across all of these will be the commitment to inclusive growth and the ongoing action of CPCA, Local Authorities and Cambridge and Peterborough Integrated Care System to work together, and with wider partners, to place health and wellbeing at the centre of system development and delivery.

Moving forward in our places

The vision, outcomes and short-term priorities set out in the previous sections present the collective ambitions and call to action across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. These actions are relevant *on some level* everywhere. However, as demonstrated in the review of existing data, moving forward requires action to take account of the different starting points in each of our places.

The following sections consider each Local Authority in turn, recapping on the specific strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats present in the local economies, prior to setting out the nuance of the short-term priorities given this local context and corresponding initial actions are included. Finally, each section suggests where additional place-based indicators, above and beyond those set out for the area as whole, might be useful to track progress more specifically.

Peterborough place priorities

Summary SWOT analysis

	Strength
	Opportunity
	Weakness
	Threat

Pre-work and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
Low levels of high skills in the area – the proportion of Peterborough’s population qualified to NVQ4+ is 32.1%, and a higher proportion of people are qualified up to NVQ level 2 than level 3 at 21.1% and 17.8% respectively	Highest GVA growth at 15% and productivity growth at 7.9% in the area	Higher rate of people working at occupational level 1 (17%) than nationally (9.2%) and lower at level 4	41.1% of Peterborough’s communities are deprived, double the national average
Engagement in HE has 31.6% of pupils progressing into HE at 18 (average for the area but slightly lower than national) and 6.7% of working age population currently in HE study (second highest in the area)	Lowest earnings joint with Fenland at £23,973, and job creation has been slower than average at 8% in recent years	Transition to net zero will impact manufacturing and supply chains – impacting the jobs and skills employers need and creating new jobs, occupations and new opportunities for those who can access support for new skills	Highest rate of Universal Credit claimants at 7.2%, with long term trends exacerbated by Covid-19 through an 88% rise in UC claimants
Poor engagement in post-18 technical education with just 8.3% of pupils moving from 16-18 study into FE and 8.6% onto apprenticeships	Fastest growing population projected at 11.7% by 2040, and working age population currently growing at 1.2%	Transformation in Industry 4.0 through automation and digitisation will continue to change how manufacturing and engineering operates and the skills employees need	Peterborough’s NEETs rate is higher than average and much higher than Cambridgeshire – at 7% NEET or unknown, compared with 3.2% for Cambridgeshire, and 5% for England
Peterborough is a net importer of apprentices from other districts and almost half of all AEB enrolments in 2019/20 were in Peterborough, at 6,720	Covid-19 and Brexit have impacted supply chains and labour supply, disrupting normal distribution and demand patterns – particularly affecting manufacturing	39% of current employment in advanced manufacturing and materials is exposed to automation, and 33% of current employment in digital and IT is exposed to automation	Economic inactivity is slightly higher than average but with a recent rise of 5.5%
Peterborough College operating and ARU Peterborough being established to serve students across the region	Stronger physical connectivity in Peterborough than other places in the area – enhancing access for people to employment and training	A rise in self-employment of 12% along with low earnings suggests precarity in work in Peterborough	
Young people may not have the role models in their communities as exposure for future opportunities	Relatively high workplace training rates at 25.4% suggest residents can access up to date work experience and skills – but may be employed with lower skills		
	Opportunity to capitalise on clusters of priority sectors to increase high skilled local opportunities and to promote good work with employers in the foundational economy facing recruitment challenges		

Strategic action

	Pre-work and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
	Strategic priorities			
First priorities for Peterborough:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widening education access and participation, increasing school achievement, and progression into technical education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Covid-19 recovery, growth and net zero transition by developing priority skills and responding to acute issues in priority sectors such as manufacturing and digital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing support to upskill and reskill in response to economic restructuring (e.g. following Covid-19, Brexit, further digitisation, as net zero transition intensifies) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting unemployed, NEETs and young people from deprived communities into training and employment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing level 4+ qualifications through progression and access into HE locally Enhancing exposure to role models, work experience, and understanding of various routes into sectors and occupations Capital investment to improve teaching facilities and kit, particularly at FE Improving careers education, information, advice and guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher skilled jobs creation through innovation Embedding modern work practices and conditions and improving job quality Increasing employers' engagement and influence on education and training and connecting residents to opportunities across the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating and growing more level 3 and 4 jobs across sectors Increasing work-based learning, particularly apprenticeships, and introducing more accessible formats (e.g. short courses/ online/blended learning) Ensuring inclusion in continued and community learning and support for disadvantaged people, adults with SEN, care leavers and ex-offenders Improving access to careers information, advice and guidance at any age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeting support for Covid-19 recovery and transitions for displaced workers Providing support for disadvantaged groups to access the labour market
	Actions			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue establishment and development of ARU Peterborough Expand employers engaging with schools and colleges in T Level placements Continue to deliver Growth Works Talent Pledge – linking employers to schools and colleges and enterprise advisers, and providing careers advice Social value contracts - require businesses receiving local funding to do outreach in schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net zero Green Skills Centre CRF – Start and Grow pre-start up and micro business enterprise skills support for individuals Energy Hub supply chain development Rapid response skill gap mapping for recovery/Brexit Continue delivery of Growth Works Skills Brokerage and Digital Talent Platform, using Growth Works as a local engagement model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Age Careers Advice – bringing together careers provision through different contracts with enhanced support AEB Innovation Fund - pilot new provision Green Jobs Action Plan and build on success of Form the Future model, supporting skills for the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CRF – Turning Point funded internships and short courses for work re-entry and digital/management Deliver local ESF projects up to 2023 focused on young people, NEETs, ex-offenders, and furthest from labour market, and deliver DWP support Add Work and Health Programme to Growth Works model Expand short courses through innovative course design, such as skills bootcamps
	Additional progress measures			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing progression rates post-18 into HE, FE, and apprenticeships towards national levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing number of professional and technical jobs, at least at level 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing numbers of workers at level 1 and 2 and increasing at level 3 and 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Falling levels of economic inactivity and UC claimants Reducing NEETs and unsustained destinations after school

Fenland place priorities

Summary SWOT analysis

	Strength
	Opportunity
	Weakness
	Threat

Pre-work and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
Lowest and falling levels of high skills , going against national trends (27% qualified to NVQ4+ compared with 43% nationally), with lower skills rising	Only place with shrinking GVA at -4.1%, and fastest falling productivity at -11.6%	Covid-19 has disrupted education and accelerated digitisation of training, worsening the impact of rural and other connection barriers	20% of Fenland’s communities are deprived – the second highest in the area but in line with the national average
69% of students progress from GCSE into vocational courses – compared to most taking A Levels elsewhere in the CPCA area, and post-Y11 vocational courses are growing at levels 1 and 2, while falling at level 3	Lowest earnings jointly with Peterborough at £23,973, and low proportion of jobs in priority sectors with 5.4% growth	Highest levels of self-employment at 18.7%, rising by 40% at a time of national fall suggests support needed for people transitioning mid-career	Covid-19 has exacerbated long term trends in unemployment and deprivation in Fenland – with an 83% rise in UC claimants
Poor engagement in post-18 formal education – lowest levels of residents in HE in the area at 3.2% and much lower than average progression at 18 into FE at 4.1%	Higher rate of people working at occupational level 1 (18.3%) than nationally (9.2%) and lower rates at levels 3 and 4	Transition to net zero will impact agriculture and supply chains – impacting the jobs and skills employers need	Residents risk being further left behind in growth and upskilling opportunities through weaker digital and transport connectivity to training and jobs
But higher than average progression at 18 onto apprenticeships at 10.7%, however this is mostly delivered outside of Fenland	Rural geography and lower physical connectivity is a barrier for people travelling and accessing work, worsened by flooding risk	Agritech is the priority sector most exposed to automation at 49% of current employment, and employment in agritech is less transferable to other priorities sectors than others	Fenland has the second highest proportion of 18 year olds moving into unsustained destinations (not progressing into and sustaining education or employment) in the area, slightly higher than national average at 13.9%
College of West Anglia campus in Wisbech, but rural access barriers to FE and HE – longer travel times to learning	Relatively high workplace training rates at 27.8% suggest residents are accessing up to date work experience and skills, but that employers have to provide training rather than sourcing this from the market		Rise of economic inactivity by 41.4% compared with a national fall
AEB learners are younger than average for the area, and more likely to have previous education at level 2 or below	Agriculture and food supply chains will continue to be impacted by labour shortages from Brexit in the short term, and agriculture is highly exposed to automation		
Young people may not have the role models in their communities as exposure for future opportunities	Fenland’s business base offers limited opportunities for high-skilled jobs , only 16% of jobs are professional and technical occupations, compared to 40% nationally.		

Strategic action

	Pre-work and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
	Strategic priorities			
First priorities for Fenland:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widening education access and participation and increasing school achievement at level 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting businesses to start up, grow and create good jobs – upskilling people in leadership and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing support to upskill and reskill in response to economic restructuring (e.g. following Covid-19, Brexit, further digitisation, as net zero transition intensifies) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting unemployed, NEETs and young people into training and employment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting people to education and training through transport and digital inclusion Enhancing exposure to role models, work experience, and understanding of various routes into sectors and occupations Capital investment to improve teaching facilities and kit, particularly at FE Focus of increasing level 4+ qualifications on in-work training and progression Improving careers education, information, advice and guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Covid-19 recovery, growth and net zero transition by developing priority skills and responding to acute issues Embedding modern work practices and conditions and improving job quality Increasing employers' engagement and influence on education and training and connecting residents in Fenland to opportunities across the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing work-based learning, particularly apprenticeships, and introducing more accessible formats (e.g. short courses/ online/blended learning) Ensuring inclusion in continued and community learning and support for disadvantaged people, adults with SEN, care leavers and ex-offenders Improving access to careers information, advice and guidance at any age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeting support for Covid-19 recovery and transitions for displaced workers Providing support for disadvantaged groups to access the labour market Connecting people to work through transport and digital inclusion
	Actions			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College of West Anglia Wisbech campus development Expand employers engaging with schools and colleges in T Level placements Continue to deliver Growth Works Talent Pledge – linking employers to schools and colleges and enterprise advisers, and providing careers advice Social value contracts - require businesses receiving local funding to do outreach in schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CRF – Start and Grow pre-start up and micro business enterprise skills support for individuals Expand Growth Works in business management and leadership emphasising job design and creation, and skills training for small business leaders Continue delivery of Growth Works Skills Brokerage and Digital Talent Platform and engagement model Rapid response skill gap mapping for recovery/Brexit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Age Careers Advice – bringing together careers provision through different contracts with enhanced support Direct AEB funding to priority skills needs, use AEB Innovation Fund to pilot new forms of training provision Green Jobs Action Plan and build on success of Form the Future model, supporting skills for the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CRF – Turning Point funded internships and short courses for work re-entry and digital/management Deliver local ESF projects up to 2023 focused on young people, NEETs, ex-offenders, and furthest from labour market, and national DWP support Add Work and Health Programme to Growth Works Expand short courses through innovative course design, such as skills bootcamps
	Additional progress measures			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing proportion of vocational courses age 16-18 studied at level 3 Increasing progression rates post-18 into HE and FE towards national levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing number of professional and technical jobs, at least at level 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing numbers of workers at level 1 and increasing at level 3 Increasing rates of in-work training (provided flexibility at various levels) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Falling levels of economic inactivity and UC claimants Increasing investment in connectivity Reducing unsustained destinations after school

Huntingdonshire place priorities

Summary SWOT analysis

	Strength
	Opportunity
	Weakness
	Threat

Pre-work and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
Higher level skills are growing with 42.1% (just below national average) qualified to NVQ4+	Working age population is falling by -0.3% and the population is projected to further fall to 2040 by - 0.6%, suggesting future ageing	Opportunity to utilise Covid-19 impact of digital by default to increase digital learning and upskilling	Low levels of deprivation but highest rise in unemployment of 56% in 2020, and high rise in UC claimants of 98% during Covid-19
But higher proportion of people are qualified up to NVQ level 2 than level 3 at 18.9% and 17.6% respectively, threatening residents benefiting from future job opportunities	Higher than average GVA growth at 10.5% and growing productivity at 2.9%	Higher rate of people working at occupational level 4 (37.5%) than nationally (31%) and lower at levels 3 and 1	Economic inactivity rise at a time of national fall, with a significant rise in inactivity among students, but remaining lower than average
Strong engagement with HE – highest proportion of residents (at working age) in the area in HE at 8% with recent growth, and 35.6% progressing into HE at 18	Largely engaged workforce earning above average levels with resident annual earnings of £28,911, and self-employment growing	Transition to net zero will impact agriculture and manufacturing supply chains, the jobs and skills employers need, and create new jobs, occupations and opportunities for those who can access support for skills	
Poorer engagement with post-18 technical education with lower than average progression into FE at 5.4% and apprenticeships at 9.2%	Slower growth in priority sector employment at 7.5% (but still above national average at 6.6%)	Transformation in automation and digitisation will continue to change how agriculture and manufacturing operates and uses technology, and the skills employees need	
Cambridge Regional College campus in Huntingdon – serving students across the region	Agriculture and food, manufacturing supply chains will continue to be impacted by labour shortages from Brexit over the short term	Agritech is the priority sector most exposed to automation at 49% of current employment, and employment in agritech is less transferable to other priorities sectors than others	
Second highest number of AEB enrolments in 2019/20 at 1,798, (but significantly lower in absolute numbers than Peterborough)	Railway links and employment and learning hubs that can grow		
Huntingdonshire is a net exporter of apprentices to other districts (mostly South Cambridgeshire)			

Strategic action

	Pre-work and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
	Strategic priorities			
First priorities for Huntingdonshire:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widening education access and participation and increasing progression and achievement at level 4+ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Covid-19 recovery, growth and net zero transition by developing priority skills and responding to acute issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing support to upskill and reskill in response to economic restructuring (e.g. following Covid-19, Brexit, further digitisation, as net zero transition intensifies) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeting support for Covid-19 recovery and transitions for displaced workers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing numbers of apprentices delivered with local employers Enhancing exposure to role models, work experience, and understanding of various routes into sectors and occupations Capital investment to improve teaching facilities and kit Improving careers education, information, advice and guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embedding modern work practices and conditions and improving job quality Increasing employers' engagement and influence on education and training and connecting residents to opportunities across the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing work-based learning, particularly apprenticeships, and introducing more accessible formats (e.g. short courses/ online/blended learning) Ensuring inclusion in continued and community learning and support for disadvantaged people, adults with SEN, care leavers and ex-offenders Improving access to careers information, advice and guidance at any age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting unemployed into training and employment
	Actions			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Neots FE provision improvements Continue delivery of Apprenticeship Levy Pooling, apprenticeship delivery through local development projects at level 3 upwards for young people Expand employers engaging with schools and colleges in T Level placements Continue to deliver Growth Works Talent Pledge – linking employers to schools and colleges and enterprise advisers, and providing careers advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CRF – Start and Grow pre-start up and micro business enterprise skills support for individuals Rapid response skill gap mapping for recovery/Brexit Continue delivery of Growth Works Skills Brokerage and Digital Talent Platform, using Growth Works as a local engagement model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Age Careers Advice – bringing together careers provision through different contracts with enhanced support Direct AEB funding to priority skills needs, use AEB Innovation Fund to pilot new forms of training provision Green Jobs Action Plan and build on success of Form the Future model, supporting skills for the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver local ESF projects up to 2023 focused on young people, NEETs, ex-offenders, and those furthest from the labour market, and deliver national Covid-19 support programmes with DWP Add Work and Health Programme to Growth Works model Expand short courses through innovative course design, such as skills bootcamps
	Additional progress measures			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing progression rates post-18 into FE and apprenticeships towards national levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing number of professional and technical jobs, particularly in priority sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing receipts of/participation in careers IAG for adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing unsustained destinations after school

East Cambridgeshire place priorities

Summary SWOT analysis

	Strength
	Opportunity
	Weakness
	Threat

Pre-work and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
Lower and falling high skills - levels qualified to NVQ4+ at 38.1% (compared with 43% nationally), and fastest growth at level 2 at 6.5% while falling elsewhere	High levels of employment with above average earnings at £27,238, higher GVA growth at 9.4%	Opportunity to utilise Covid-19 impact of digital by default to increase digital learning and upskilling in a rural area and FE cold spot	Low levels of deprivation – 0% of neighbourhoods in the national 20% most deprived
Low progression into HE with 25.4% of 18 year olds entering HE compared with 31.5% across the area and 35.2% nationally	Population growth has been slight and isn’t projected to grow – suggesting future ageing and a smaller future workforce	A more even spread of occupation levels means a lower rate of people working at each occupational level than nationally – but with more working at level 2 than 3	High rise in UC claimants of 104% during Covid-19
Highest progression into apprenticeships in the area at 18 at 11.4%	Clusters of employment in priority sectors are growing quickly at 14.3% growth in employment	Covid-19 has disrupted education increasing barriers in an FE cold spot	Economic inactivity is the lowest in the area and has fallen by more than national averages at -6.5%
FE provision cold spot in a rural area with a lack of physical facilities, and East Cambridgeshire is a net exporter of apprentices to other districts (mostly South Cambridgeshire)	Falling productivity at -6% and lower than average level of people working at occupation level 3 at 19.8% threaten growth opportunities	Transition to net zero will impact the jobs and skills employers need , and create new jobs, occupations and new opportunities for those who can access support for new skills	
East Cambridgeshire has the lowest AEB enrolment in the area , with 783 in 2019/20	Supply chains and labour shortages from Covid-19 and Brexit are affecting the range of industries	Transformation in automation and digitisation will continue to change a range of industries and the skills employees need	
Young people may not have the role models in their communities as exposure for future opportunities		Residents risk being further left behind in growth and upskilling opportunities through weaker digital and transport connectivity to training	

Strategic action

	Pre-work and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
	Strategic priorities			
First priorities for East Cambs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widening education access and progression into HE, increasing achievement at level 4+ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Covid-19 recovery, growth and net zero transition by developing priority skills, and growing jobs at level 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing work-based learning, particularly progression into level 4 skills, and introducing more accessible formats (e.g. short courses/online/blended learning) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeting support for Covid-19 recovery and transitions for displaced workers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital investment to improve teaching facilities and kit, particularly at FE Connecting people to education and training through transport and digital inclusion Enhancing exposure to role models, work experience, and understanding of various routes into sectors and occupations Improving careers education, information, advice and guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing employers' engagement and influence on education and training and connecting residents to opportunities across the area Embedding modern work practices and conditions and improving job quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing support to upskill and reskill in response to economic restructuring (e.g. following Covid-19, Brexit, further digitisation, as net zero transition intensifies) Ensuring inclusion in continued and community learning and support for disadvantaged people, adults with SEN, care leavers and ex-offenders Improving access to careers information, advice and guidance at any age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting people to work through transport and digital inclusion Supporting unemployed into training and employment
	Actions			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Cambridgeshire FE provision development Expand employers engaging with schools and colleges in T Level placements Continue to deliver Growth Works Talent Pledge – linking employers to schools and colleges and enterprise advisers, and providing careers advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rapid response skill gap mapping for recovery/Brexit Continue delivery of Growth Works Skills Brokerage and Digital Talent Platform, using Growth Works as a local engagement model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Age Careers Advice – bringing together careers provision through different contracts with enhanced support Direct AEB funding to priority skills needs, use AEB Innovation Fund to pilot new forms of training provision Green Jobs Action Plan and build on success of Form the Future model, supporting skills for the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver local ESF projects up to 2023 focused on young people, NEETs, ex-offenders, and those furthest from the labour market, and deliver national Covid-19 support programmes with DWP Add Work and Health Programme to Growth Works model Expand short courses through innovative course design, such as skills bootcamps
	Additional progress measures			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing progression rates post-18 into HE and FE towards national levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing number of professional and technical jobs, at least at level 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing numbers of workers at level 2 and increasing at level 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing investment in connectivity Reducing unsustained destinations after school

Cambridge place priorities

Summary SWOT analysis

Strength

Opportunity

Weakness

Threat

Pre-work and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
Highest rates of residents qualified to NVQ4+ at 60%, highest rate of students taking A Levels at 68%, and highest progression onto university from school at 41.2%	High levels of employment in priority growth sectors, and highest earnings in the area of £31,673	Lowest levels of in work training – with 11.9% of people reporting having had in work training in the last 13 weeks – threatens to leaving behind lower skilled workers	Localised inequality – rise in unemployment of 28.6% and rise in UC claimants during the pandemic of 103%, with 4.3% of neighbourhoods in top 20% deprived
Lowest levels of progression at 18 into FE at just 2.8% compared with 9% nationally and apprenticeships at 4.8% compared with 9.3% nationally, and an educational attainment gap – only 43% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the benchmark in GCSE English and Maths, vs. 75% of children not eligible for free school meals	But falls in employment levels of -3.5%, the slowest growth in GVA at 4.6% and falling productivity at -4.8% threaten to limit growth opportunities	Higher rate of people working at occupational level 4 (53.8%) than nationally (31%) and lower at levels 3 and 2	Below average economic inactivity falling at -2.9%
University of Cambridge, Cambridge Regional College, two Sixth Form Colleges and COWA Milton Campus are based here – serving students across the region	Cambridge’s population isn’t growing, and the working age population has shrunk by -3.4%, with a projected population fall of -2.1% by 2040	Covid-19 has disrupted education and accelerated digitisation of training - increasing inequalities	
Cambridge is a net importer of apprentices from other districts	Hospitality and leisure will continue to be impacted by labour shortages from Brexit over the short term	Transition to net zero will impact supply chains and a range of industries the jobs and skills employers need and create new jobs, occupations and new opportunities for those who can access support for new skills	
Access to HE, institutions and priority sector employers should mean good access for young people to experience and role models	Stronger physical connectivity and access to employment and learning	Transformation in Industry 4.0 through automation and digitisation will continue to change industries: 31% of current life sciences employment, 39% of current employment in advanced manufacturing, and 33% of current employment in digital and IT is predicted to be exposed to automation	

Strategic action

	Pre-work and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
	Strategic priorities			
First priorities for Cambridge:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring access to technical education, apprenticeship and training choices are available to students not following A Level and university routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Covid-19 recovery, growth and net zero transition by developing priority skills and responding to acute issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing work-based learning, particularly apprenticeships and for those with lower level skills, and introducing more accessible formats (e.g. short courses/ online/blended learning) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeting support for Covid-19 recovery and transitions for displaced workers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital investment to improve teaching facilities and kit, and expanding access Improving careers education, information, advice and guidance, particularly for students not following A Level and university routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing employers' engagement and influence on education and training and connecting residents to opportunities across the area Opening up access in priority sectors to students following vocational and technical routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving access to careers information, advice and guidance at any age Ensuring inclusion in continued and community learning and support for disadvantaged people, adults with SEN, care leavers and ex-offenders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing support for disadvantaged people to access the labour market Supporting unemployed into training and employment
	Actions			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue delivery of Apprenticeship Levy Pooling, apprenticeship delivery through local development projects at level 3 upwards for young people All Age Careers Advice throughout school years Continue to deliver Growth Works Talent Pledge – linking employers to schools and colleges and enterprise advisers, and providing careers advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rapid response skill gap mapping for recovery/Brexit Continue delivery of Growth Works Skills Brokerage and Digital Talent Platform, using Growth Works as a local engagement model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Age Careers Advice – bringing together careers provision through different contracts with enhanced support Direct AEB funding to priority skills needs, use AEB Innovation Fund to pilot new forms of training provision Green Jobs Action Plan and build on success of Form the Future model, supporting skills for the future Expanding Region of Learning programme for community learning and talent development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver local ESF projects up to 2023 focused on young people, NEETs, ex-offenders, and those furthest from the labour market, and deliver national Covid-19 support programmes with DWP Add Work and Health Programme to Growth Works model Expand short courses through innovative course design, such as skills bootcamps
	Additional progress measures			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing progression rates post-18 into FE and apprenticeships towards national levels for young people following vocational routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reversing employment level decline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing rates of in-work training (provided flexibility at various levels) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing localised inequalities

South Cambridgeshire place priorities

Summary SWOT analysis

Strength

Opportunity

Weakness

Threat

Pre-work and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
High and growing levels of high skills at 56.2% with NVQ4+, and lower than average proportions qualified up to lower levels	Fast growing GVA at 13.1%, higher average annual earnings of £31,425, and highest growth in employment in priority sectors at 29.1%	Low levels of in work training – with 13.3% of people reporting having had in work training in the last 13 weeks – threat of leaving behind lower skilled workers	High growth of 60.2% in economic inactivity levels with falling productivity threatens to limit immediate growth opportunities
At 20.5%, lower progression from school here into HE suggests gaps in the right provision for some cohorts	Fastest growing working age population at 2% against a projected overall fall in population to 2040 of -3.7%	Higher rate of people working at occupational level 4 (46.2%) than nationally (31%) and lower at levels 3, 2 and 1	High rise in UC claimants of 135% during Covid-19
South Cambridgeshire is an importer of apprentices for the area, and higher than average proportions of school leavers progress into apprenticeships at 10%	But falling productivity at -5.4% compared with slight national growth at 1.2%	Covid-19 has disrupted education and accelerated digitisation of training - increasing inequalities	
Largest proportion of AEB learners in the area with prior education at level 3 and above	Supply chains and labour shortages from Covid-19 and Brexit are affecting the range of industries	Transition to net zero will impact supply chains and a range of industries in the jobs and skills employers need create new jobs, occupations and new opportunities for those who can access support for new skills	
Access to high level skills and priority sector employers should mean good access for young people to experience and role models	Stronger physical connectivity and access to employment and learning	Transformation in automation and digitisation will continue to change a range of industries and the skills employees need	

Strategic action

	Pre-work and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
	Strategic priorities			
First priorities for South Cambs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Widening progression into HE from local schools and into FE and technical education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Supporting Covid-19 recovery, growth and net zero transition by developing priority skills and responding to acute issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increasing work-based learning to support growing productivity, and introducing more accessible formats (e.g. short courses/online/blended learning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Targeting support for Covid-19 recovery and transitions for displaced workers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Capital investment to improve teaching facilities and kit, particularly at FEImproving careers education, information, advice and guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increasing employers' engagement and influence on education and training and connecting residents to opportunities across the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improving access to careers information, advice and guidance at any ageEnsuring inclusion in continued and community learning and support for disadvantaged people, adults with SEN, care leavers and ex-offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Supporting unemployed into training and employment
	Actions			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue delivery of Apprenticeship Levy Pooling, apprenticeship delivery through local development projects at level 3 upwards for young peopleAll Age Careers Advice throughout school yearsContinue to deliver Growth Works Talent Pledge – linking employers to schools and colleges and enterprise advisers, and providing careers advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Rapid response skill gap mapping for recovery/BrexitContinue delivery of Growth Works Skills Brokerage and Digital Talent Platform, using Growth Works as a local engagement model	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All Age Careers Advice – bringing together careers provision through different contracts with enhanced supportDirect AEB funding to priority skills needs, use AEB Innovation Fund to pilot new forms of training provisionGreen Jobs Action Plan and build on success of Form the Future model, supporting skills for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Deliver local ESF projects up to 2023 focused on young people, NEETs, ex-offenders, and those furthest from the labour market, and deliver national Covid-19 support programmes with DWPAdd Work and Health Programme to Growth Works modelExpand short courses through innovative course design, such as skills bootcamps
	Additional progress measures			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increasing progression rates post-18 into HE and FE towards national levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increasing number of professional & technical jobs, at least at level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increasing receipts of/participation in careers IAG for adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reducing unsustained destinations after school

Annex A: Progress measures

The progress measures set out in Fig. 23 in section 3, and localised in the place pages in section 4 are displayed in the below scorecard. This shows each place's relative position now on each indicator relating to the progress measures. In implementing this Employment and Skills Strategy and monitoring progress, the below can be updated in a dashboard to track progress. Each of the indicators is accessible in a nationally published dataset that is regularly updated.

Figure 26. Progress measures scorecard – current position on key indicators

Progress measure	Indicator	Date	Peterborough	Fenland	Huntingdonshire	East Cambridgeshire	Cambridge	South Cambridgeshire	National
Relative deprivation (reducing)	IMD overall	2019	41.1%	20.0%	1.9%	0.0%	4.3%	0.0%	20.0%
Low or no qualifications (decreasing)	% All people aged 16-64 : NVQ4+	2020	32.1%	27.0%	42.1%	38.1%	60.0%	56.2%	43.0%
	% All people aged 16-64 : NVQ3	2020	17.8%	25.3%	17.6%	19.2%	11.8%	16.1%	16.9%
	% All people aged 16-64 : NVQ2	2020	21.1%	23.9%	18.9%	25.1%	8.2%	13.5%	15.5%
	% All people aged 16-64 : NVQ1	2020	11.8%	8.2%	15.2%	8.0%	5.5%	6.6%	9.7%
Skill levels (increasing)	% All people aged 16-64 : Trade Apprenticeships	2020	1.7%	5.8%	1.8%	4.3%	3.7%	2.2%	2.8%
Progression at 18 into FE, apprenticeships and HE (increasing)	Pupils progressing at 18 into HE (%)	2018/19	31.6%	29.4%	35.6%	25.4%	41.2%	20.5%	35.2%
	Pupils progressing at 18 into FE (%)	2018/19	8.3%	4.1%	5.4%	4.7%	2.8%	9.8%	9.0%
	Pupils progressing at 18 into Apprenticeships (%)	2018/19	8.6%	10.7%	9.2%	11.4%	4.8%	10.0%	9.3%
Unsustained destinations (decreasing)	Pupils progressing at 18 into Work (%)	2018/19	27.7%	33.9%	32.8%	38.8%	34.3%	37.2%	25.6%
	Pupils progressing at 18 into Unsustained destination (%)	2018/19	15.3%	13.9%	10.9%	12.1%	9.6%	11.9%	13.3%
School participation (increasing)*	% 16-17 year olds in full time education or training	2021	87.9%			88.6%			87.4%
NEET numbers (decreasing)*	% 16-17 year olds NEET or not known	2021	7.0%			3.2%			5.5%
In-work training (increasing)	Received job related training in last 13 weeks 16-64 (%)	2020	25.4%	27.8%	15.7%	18.5%	11.9%	13.3%	
Employment levels (increasing)	Employed 16-64 (Rate)	2020	74.1	70.1	77.2	83.2	77.2	76.1	75.3
Earnings (increasing)	Resident annual earnings	2020	£ 23,973	£ 23,972	£ 28,911	£ 27,238	£ 31,673	£ 31,425	£25,780
GVA and productivity levels (increasing)	Total GVA (£) change %		15.0%	-4.1%	10.5%	9.4%	4.6%	13.1%	8.6%
	Productivity change (2014-2019)		7.9%	-11.6%	2.9%	-6.0%	-4.8%	-5.4%	1.2%
Skilled jobs (increasing)	Occupation skill level 4 (Rate)	2020	24.7%	14.2%	37.5%	28.3%	53.8%	46.2%	31.1%
	Occupation skill level 3 (Rate)	2020	26.3%	16.6%	19.3%	19.8%	12.7%	24.9%	28.0%
	Occupation skill level 2 (Rate)	2020	31.6%	31.8%	31.5%	27.5%	13.6%	17.8%	31.4%
	Occupation skill level 1 (Rate)	2020	17.0%	18.3%	6.1%	6.5%	9.9%	7.2%	9.2%
Economic inactivity (decreasing)	Economically inactive: 16-64 (Rate)	2020	21.7	25.3	19.3	16.8	19.6	21.7	21.1
Universal Credit (decreasing)	Universal credit claims % of working age pop	May-21	13.5%	9.2%	6.1%	5.3%	6.6%	4.7%	9.2%

Notes:

- School participation and NEET data is only collated at Upper Tier Local Authority level, and is therefore not available broken down by District in Cambridgeshire.
- Indicators for travel to work times are not included here as they are not regularly updated – these are based on 10-yearly census data. Indicators for vocational level study in Fenland and connectivity investment are also not included here as they are produced locally within local authorities and the CPCA.



Metro — Dynamics