

2023-2024



PURPOSE

We are determined to be the college that our communities need us to be.

OUR MISSION IS:

To provide skills to enable all students, employer partners and our community to thrive.

OUR VISION IS TO BECOME:

A force for raising aspirations across our communities, where high-performing staff encourage students to stretch the boundaries of their potential and, in partnership with employers, develop the workforce of the future.

OUR VALUES:

- R**espect
- I**ntegrity
- C**ollaboration
- H**igh **E**xpectations
- R**esponsibility

We revisit our mission, vision and values every year and, from them, develop a three-year strategic plan. This sets out objectives for each of the three years. Our Strategic Plan for 2022-25 is available here and will be refreshed in October 2023 with the 2023-26 Strategic Plan. We expect this next iteration of our Strategic Plan to reflect the progress made locally with devolution as well as the outcome of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).

Essential to the Strategic Plan, and crucial in supporting its delivery, are our Curriculum Strategy, our Employer Engagement Strategy, our Community Engagement Strategy, and our People Strategy. These are also available here.

In creating this Community Pledge, we believe that we have satisfied our statutory duty to review our provision in the light of the Local Skills Improvement Plan in order to best meet local need. We will revisit this in the autumn of 2023, after the LSIP is published.



CONTEXT AND PLACE

We define our community as all those living, working or operating a business in:

- Ashfield district
- Mansfield district
- The south-western and south-eastern parts of Bassetlaw, including Cuckney and Tuxford
- The western part of Newark and Sherwood district, including Ollerton and Southwell
- The northern part of Gedling district, including Calverton and Arnold
- The northern part of Broxtowe district, including Brinsley and Eastwood
- The eastern part of Amber Valley district, including Alferton, Heanor and Somercotes
- The eastern and southern parts of Bolsover district, including Bolsover, Pinxton, Shirebrook, South Normanton and Tibshelf.

Most of these towns and villages see Mansfield and/or Ashfield as their natural centre of gravity although, on the fringes, this could turn towards Nottingham, Chesterfield, Worksop or Newark.

All of this area sits within the Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (D2N2) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area and is included within the plans for the devolution of D2N2 as the East Midlands Mayoral County Combined Authority, scheduled to come into effect from May 2024.

Mansfield, Ashfield and Bassetlaw have faced significant socio-economic challenges since the early 1990s, particularly in relation to health, educational attainment, employment, and income. However, both districts are currently benefitting from significant capital investment through the government's levelling-up agenda, which presents

an opportunity to address the underlying causes of these issues in the medium term.

Whilst Newark and Sherwood is not a particularly deprived district as a whole, those towns and villages that sit closest to our college are largely above the national average for deprivation.

Gedling and Broxtowe are not particularly deprived districts as a whole, but there are parts of both districts within our community which suffer more deprivation than the national average. Gedling also has some poor indicators around health and wellbeing and educational achievement.

Whilst Amber Valley is not a particularly deprived district as a whole, those towns and villages that sit within our community are almost universally above the national average for deprivation.

Bolsover faces significant challenges with poor data in relation to educational achievement at age 19 and access to employment, and almost all the towns and villages within our community are above the national average for deprivation.

Our mission and vision drive us to work with partners throughout this community to meet immediate skills needs, not only in order to enable businesses of all types to function effectively but also to encourage and support those businesses to seek to offer better opportunities for local people to develop a prosperous career within the local area. Too many of our most talented people are unable to achieve their ambitions without leaving our area, and we need to find ways to enable some of them to stay.

We also need to find ways to re-engage into education and training those who long ago lost belief that they can learn effectively and develop useful skills. We need to work with partners to support those who are economically inactive to

enter, or re-enter, the workforce in a sustainable way. We need to support the most disadvantaged in our communities, particularly those with learning difficulties or disabilities and those with experience of care, to fulfil their potential and find rewarding careers.

The college operates across four centres: it has specialist engineering and construction centres in Ashfield, both very close to the Sutton Parkway railway station, and a sixth form college and the main college site in Mansfield. Over the next two years, the college will open the Future Tech Skills and Knowledge Exchange on the same site as its sixth form college, a new civil engineering training centre adjacent to its construction centre, and will significantly upgrade and expand its construction centre to support the delivery of training in sustainable energy sources and modern methods of construction. Its engineering training centre will become the UK's first Gene Haas Centre for Advanced Manufacturing, in partnership with the Gene Haas Foundation (Haas Automation

manufactures computer numerically-controlled manufacturing equipment, some of which the college owns and uses in the delivery of its training).

The college has a significant strength in its response to inclusion and works collaboratively with Nottinghamshire County Council, in particular, on employability programmes for individuals with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The college has a well-established supported internship programme and has worked with local employers to review and develop their inclusive employment practices. The college's high needs provision was recognised in its most recent Ofsted report as being outstanding and, over the next three years, the college will develop programmes further so that local employers can benefit from a more diverse workforce. Similarly, the college has adopted the seven principles of corporate parenting; over the next three years, the college will work with others to address achievement gaps for young people who are care experienced and will aim to ensure that positive destinations are at least in-line with peers.

The college has strong links with key public sector employers within Mansfield and Ashfield, including both district councils and the local hospital. All partners share a commitment as anchor institutions to work collaboratively to address the key economic and social challenges of the communities served by the college. Over the next two years, the college, along with partners, will develop a formal collaboration agreement as well as the development of specific training programmes to address the skills and recruitment challenges within the public sector.



APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THIS COMMUNITY PLEDGE



We have worked very hard to develop strong relationships with local partners in the private sector, the public sector and the voluntary sector. Our principal is chair of the Making Mansfield Place Board, and one of our vice-principals is vice-chair of the Discover Ashfield Place Board. We are represented on the Newark and Sherwood District Place Board and are also engaged at a strategic level with Bolsover District Council. Our principal sits on the Chief Officers' Forum convened by Nottinghamshire County Council and the Universities for Nottingham partnership. He is also a member of the Nottinghamshire Violence Reduction Partnership Strategic Board. One of our vice-principals is a board member of the Mansfield and Ashfield 2020 Business Network and chairs the Education and Skills Partnership. We are in the third year of a 25-year formal collaboration with Nottingham Trent University (NTU), which

has created numerous opportunities for new discussions with a wider range of partners. We have a partnership agreement with the Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, which has helped us to better understand their skills needs and the opportunities they might present to local people if we can work together. The East Midlands Chamber of Commerce is represented on our Corporation Board, along with Ashfield District Council and Mansfield Building Society.

We are a patron of the Mansfield and Ashfield 2020 Business Network and regularly engage proactively in their events. We host their monthly Women in Business events in our college restaurant. We use this position to inform local businesses about changes and opportunities in educational opportunities, to seek their views and/or assistance in developing new offers, and to listen hard to their views on the skills offer and how it might be improved.

We have listened hard to what our partners say to us and have sought to be innovative and creative in our response, and to seek always to deepen our partnerships in order to meet emerging needs or to respond to opportunities that present.

We have engaged positively and proactively with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) in the development of the D2N2 Local Skills Improvement Plan. We have joined the steering group, engaged in the development of the survey, distributed the research materials to our network of employer partners, invited the FSB to present at our annual Skills Conference, and attended five different focus groups. We have considered the "actionable priorities" that will feature at the heart of the LSIP, both as an individual college but also in partnership with the other colleges within D2N2, with the other major providers serving our community and with Nottingham Trent University. The outcomes of this analysis are set out in the next section of this Pledge.

We hold an annual Skills Conference, where employers and other partners of all types come together to learn about emerging opportunities and projects and then to consider how these might best be addressed in order to deliver optimal benefit to local people and local businesses. Topics covered in 2023 included the LSIP, the Automated Distribution and Manufacturing Centre, and the employer-led sport curriculum. In previous years, the topics have included the LEP skills priorities, the college's partnership with NTU, devolution, and college accountability. Future Skills Conferences will be hosted in partnership with NTU's Mansfield Hub as part of our formal collaboration.

The college works with over 2,000 employer partners from businesses in every major industry, from the very small to very large, and across private and public sectors. In 2021, we changed the nature

of much of this engagement from the selling of 'products' (mostly apprenticeships) to in-depth engagement and understanding, which then feeds back into the development and delivery of our curriculum offer. This evolution is still working its way through our processes, but it is having widespread impact upon our curriculum planning. Our partnership with the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sports and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) is the most advanced example of this. A series of training needs analyses undertaken by a secondee to the college from CIMSPA has led to the complete redesign of our sports offer at Level 2 and a unique course for local people aimed specifically at the jobs on offer within the CIMSPA network of members.

The college's Corporation Board sets aside two whole days annually to consider all of the intelligence gathered through these partnerships and mechanisms and seek to convert them into the strategic plan for the next three years. Governors are given information from a range of sources. In 2023, the first strategy day included a presentation on the emerging findings from the LSIP by the FSB and then a roundtable discussion including CEOs from Ashfield and Mansfield district councils, Nottinghamshire County Council, the strategic director from Newark and Sherwood District Council, and the director of people at Sherwood Forest Hospitals Trust.

The college's curriculum planning process draws upon all of this and integrates it with labour market intelligence, destination data, and both routine and ad-hoc feedback from employers to inform the design and delivery of courses. For 16-18-year-olds, this follows an annual cycle but, for adults and apprentices, the college has challenged itself, and will continue to do so, to improve the speed and effectiveness of its response to such information.



CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL, REGIONAL, LOCAL PRIORITIES



The National Skills Priority Sectors are listed in the table below, along with descriptions of the college's offer in 2022-23 and any changes planned for 2023-24. These priorities align very closely with the priorities for employers within our community.

SECTOR	CURRENT (2022-23) PROVISION	ADDITIONS FOR 2023-24
CONSTRUCTION	<p>Wide range of full-time course and apprenticeships at Levels 1, 2 and 3; largely in traditional trades, benefitting from extensive industry sponsorship, which provides site visits, work experience and work placement opportunities and supports understanding of low-carbon essentials and green skills.</p> <p>(16-18s: 457; adults: 171; apprentices: 314)</p>	<p>Students will plan, design, and construct the first of five or six liveable, single-storey dwellings with the Bolsover District Council construction team.</p> <p>Our new Civil Engineering Training Centre will support new courses in modern methods of construction and off-site construction.</p> <p>We will launch the Design, Surveying and Planning T Level in September 2023.</p> <p>We will offer the following new programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ground Source and Air Source Heat Pumps - External Cladding - Concrete Formwork <p>Suite of online Green Skills training to be released May 2023, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding Heat Pumps • Understanding Solar PV Installations • Smart Home Heating Systems
ENGINEERING AND MANUFACTURING	<p>Full-time courses at Levels 2 and 3 covering a range of topics, including electronics, robotics, computer-aided drawing, and machining.</p> <p>A wide range of apprenticeships covering machining, maintenance, fitters, and technical support.</p> <p>We have been named as the First Gene Haas Centre for Advanced Manufacturing in the UK.</p> <p>(16-18s: 250; adults: 50; apprentices: 290)</p>	<p>We will launch the Engineering and Manufacturing T Level in September 2023. Both the Level 2 and 3 full-time courses will incorporate more machining activities in response to employer demand.</p> <p>Suite of online green skills training to be released May 2023, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding Electric Vehicle (EV) Charge Points • Understanding Solar Thermal Technology • Battery Energy Storage Systems for renewables • Introduction to Hydrogen and Fuel Cells

SECTOR	CURRENT (2022-23) PROVISION	ADDITIONS FOR 2023-24
DIGITAL AND TECHNOLOGY	<p>Wide range of full-time courses and apprenticeships at Levels 1, 2 and 3 in computer science, digital arts, and e-sports.</p> <p>Our partnership with Ofcom provides short, digital problem-solving activities to vulnerable communities.</p> <p>We are assisting Mansfield and Ashfield district councils in their design and implementation of their digital strategies across their workforce and communities.</p> <p>(16-18s: 271; adults: 14; apprentices: 21)</p>	<p>Our learning company, Resolve IT, will provide face-to-face digital solutions to our communities through pop-up 'shops' and will be visiting our vulnerable residents in nursing homes, at the NHS sites, and community centres.</p> <p>Linking with Mansfield District Council to determine the level of digital inequality across the district, with the drive to address these inequalities through skills and provision of hardware and connectivity.</p>
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	<p>Full-time courses and apprenticeships at Levels 1, 2 and 3.</p> <p>Full-time and part-time Access to HE courses in nursing, healthcare professions and science, allowing learners to study to change careers and continue to work.</p> <p>(16-18s: 140; adults: 197; apprentices: 32)</p>	<p>Flexible, online Access to HE Nursing and Midwifery courses.</p> <p>Suite of online courses for adults, including the CQC Care Certificate.</p> <p>Other new courses will build towards the Care Certificate, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Social Care – Duty of Care • Infection and Prevention Control • Safeguarding Children in Health and Social Care
HAULAGE AND LOGISTICS	<p>Haulage and 'warehouse to wheels' programmes commence in June 2023, in partnership with JCP, to re-engage people into employment.</p> <p>Partnership with Peter Smythe Driver Training Centre to increase the number of drivers for the haulage industry.</p>	<p>Suite of online courses for adults to be released June 2023. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution Operations • Operating Within a Supply Chain • Importing and Exporting • Environmental Impact of Transport and Logistics Operations



SECTOR	CURRENT (2022-23) PROVISION	ADDITIONS FOR 2023-24
SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS	<p>A Levels in further maths, mathematics, chemistry, biology, physics, and environmental science. Full-time applied science with forensics.</p> <p>GCSE biology for adults to enable progress to universities. (16-18s: 229; adults: 14)</p>	<p>We will work with Sherwood Forest Hospitals Trust and Nottingham Trent University to development and design a curriculum to provide pathways into science careers in the NHS.</p>
ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS AT LEVEL 2 AND BELOW	<p>Flexible and varied functional skills offer to any learner who does not currently hold level 2, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people • Apprentices • Apprenticeship applicants • Aspiring nurses, teachers, or teaching assistants • NHS staff wishing to progress • College staff • Homework club and catch-up lessons for GCSE learners. <p>(16-18s: 1,333; adults: 997; apprentices: 332)</p>	<p>Flexible functional skills in English and/or mathematics for professionals.</p> <p>Introduce a specific programme of study ('Boost') for young learners who wish to concentrate their energies on obtaining a GCSE grade 4 or above in English and mathematics, improving their study skills and developing better transferable skills.</p> <p>Increase Multiply provision to adults in Nottinghamshire who do not hold a Level 2 (mathematics only).</p>
DIGITAL SKILLS AT LEVEL 1 AND BELOW	<p>Mansfield District Council digital skills assessments to identify digital skill gaps. Using this information to address the skill gaps, improve their workforces productively and progress to higher-paid roles.</p>	<p>Learning hubs in key communities will enable delivery of digital skills to local residents. Close working relationships with civic partners and employers to enable delivery to employed adults.</p> <p>Development of a new introductory course which allows better progression to Essential Digital Skills accredited qualification.</p>

RESPONDING TO THE LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN



The table below sets out the college's response to those actionable priorities emerging from the LSIP which are immediately relevant to the college.

KEY THEME	ACTIONABLE PRIORITY	COLLEGE RESPONSE
DIGITAL SKILLS	There is a need for essential digital skills training for both young people and adults, as well as the confidence to familiarise employees with sector/organisation-specific software packages.	The college will build upon its mandatory digital skills offering for young people. The content and effectiveness of the current product will be evaluated and developed further for the 2023-24 academic year. The college will better promote its essential digital skills offering with local employers and, where needed deliver a bespoke programme of development targeted at the specific needs of the employer.
	Colleges should respond to the 10 identified specialist skills shortage occupations within digital industries, such as programmer and IT management.	The college will continue to work closely with its digital employer panel to develop its curriculum offer for specialist digital skills, including T levels. The college will work with employers to map career pathways for young people and adults entering digital industries that provide opportunities for entry into employment at lower levels and a planned skills pathway to upskill existing employees to meet need. The college will use its partnership with NTU to map digital skills pathways from Level 3 to Level 7.
NET ZERO	Develop a range of introductory programmes that enable employers to embrace net zero objectives whilst at the same time delivering specialist skills for low-carbon careers.	The college will collaborate with other D2N2 providers to deliver a series of short programmes that enable employers from all sectors to implement a net zero roadmap. In 2023-24, these programmes will focus on business administration, engineering, construction, manufacturing, and transport. The college will prioritise curriculum developments in electric vehicle, automation, modern methods of construction, and retro-fit.

KEY THEME	ACTIONABLE PRIORITY	COLLEGE RESPONSE
ESSENTIAL AND TRANSFERABLE SKILLS	Create a common framework for transferable skills that applies to young people, adults entering the workplace, and existing employees.	The college will work with other D2N2 colleges to develop and implement a common framework for transferable skills that can be addressed at various levels and applied to all sectors. This will include the exploration of digital solutions such as 'Skill Builder'.
	Employers have fed back their desire to offer real work experience opportunities for young people.	The college will better promote the work placement opportunities with its local employer base, working in partnership with organisations such as Mansfield and Ashfield 2020.
LOCAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS	Employers report challenges in terms of recruitment. Working with employers on inclusive recruitment practices may well help address such challenges.	The college will develop a series of seminars that dispel some of the myths around the employment of individuals furthest from the jobs market. In 2023-24, the seminars will focus on individuals with SEND and care experienced young people. The college will draw on best practice established through its supported internship programme.
LOCAL SKILLS SYSTEM	Better promote what colleges and other providers can offer to employers.	The college will work with D2N2 providers to explore a 'single shopfront' for employers.
	Develop collaborative initiatives with employers to address colleges' staffing challenges.	The college will work with construction and engineering employers to explore the use of their staff as 'skills demonstrators' as well as potential roles for staff nearing the end of their careers in industry.

BETWEEN 1 SEPTEMBER 2023 AND 31 AUGUST 2024, WE WILL:

- Construct the Future Tech Skills and Knowledge Exchange in Mansfield to provide local businesses with the opportunity to explore and embrace new technologies into their organisations and to enable local people to develop the skills those employers need.
- Develop and open the Civil Engineering Training Centre in Ashfield to provide local businesses with the opportunity to develop and adopt more environmentally sustainable practices into their operations and to enable local people to develop the skills those employers need.
- Extend our construction centre in Ashfield to offer skills training in renewable energy and modern methods of construction.
- Successfully construct an inhabitable single-storey dwelling in partnership with Bolsover District Council, using college students as key members of the workforce.
- Build on our status as the UK's first Gene Haas Centre for Advanced Manufacturing by offering new and improved opportunities for local and regional employers.
- Launch three new T Levels in construction, early years and engineering in September 2023 and prepare to launch four more, in business administration, computer science, creative, and health science, in September 2024.
- Work with key public sector partners to develop a public service programme for launch in 2024, aimed at securing a workforce for those partners and at providing inclusive, sustained and supportive employment for local people, whatever their backgrounds.
- Establish a dedicated team to ensure that the college's adoption of the principles of corporate parenthood leads to improved experience, outcomes and destinations for care-experienced students.



CORPORATION STATEMENT

The Corporation Board of West Nottinghamshire College has actively engaged in the construction of this Community Pledge and is fully committed to supporting the college's leadership team in delivering upon it alongside our Strategic Plan. We will monitor progress towards all the targets set out in this pledge and ensure that action is taken should any appear to be at risk.

Furthermore, we will support the college's leadership team to develop an even more ambitious pledge for 2024.

Sean Lyons

Chair: West Nottinghamshire College Corporation Board



