

Economy, Innovation and Skills Action group

- Progress since Northern Devon Futures visioning workshop, June 2023

Meeting progress

- September – Social Mobility focus
 - Annemarie Sims - University of Exeter and SW Social Mobility Commission
- Northern Devon [factes](#);
 - Low historic upward absolute intergenerational social mobility compared to other regions
 - Current high rates of unskilled work and low progression rates to higher-level qualifications suggest this trend will continue
 - Some of the worst education outcomes in the country for poorer children suggest unequal chances and poor relative mobility
- Highlights 3 key barriers;
 - Disconnected areas with resulting challenges to services, access to further education and jobs as well as resulting youth exodus.
 - Low wage economy, including low Free School Meals levels but high child poverty
 - Lack of impetus for change
 - Katie Potter - Kailo, 3 year UCL-funded research project focused on Northern Devon and Newham in East London with a brief to explore 2 key Opportunity areas.

How might we inspire, support and connect young people to a diverse range of jobs, opportunities and careers?

- Key threads include the need for;
 - Career support and mentorship
 - Feeling inspired
 - Overcoming competing interests
 - Transport improvements and access
 - Employers valuing diverse skills
 - Inspiring diversity

How might we increase mental health awareness, literacy and strategies for young people, families and other key people in Young People's lives so they can build more supportive relationships?

- Key threads include the need to;
 - Address information and misinformation
 - Balance the benefits of social media
 - understand that there are good fixes and bad fixes
 - provide counselling and informal supports

Sub-group activities;

- Data
 - Feeding into a large data trawl to inform both the next North Devon and Torridge Economic Strategy and the Torridge Place Story for the Levelling Up Partnership to ensure both pieces are aligned.
 - North Devon+ are currently pulling the data sets together into a rationalised underpinning appendix for the future strategy document.
- Competitiveness
 - Driving the creation of a Northern Devon Maker's Map to raise visibility of the region's engineering and manufacturing businesses.
 - Objective is to improve supply chain awareness and also improve engagement with education
 - Project being delivered by NDMA, working closely with Petroc and funded by North Devon Council and Torridge District Council through the Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Clean Maritime
 - Terms of Reference drafted for a North Devon and Torridge Clean Maritime Cluster group, with initial membership scoped.
 - Supported the successful Petroc Marine event (June 2023) which attracted 70+ delegates including a range of local, regional and national businesses and support organisations. Sessions were also held for school learners, careers leads at the schools and an open community session was held. The event was supported by the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult and also a number of Offshore Wind developers, including Flotation White Cross.
 - Fed into the Clean Maritime Growth Vision procurement which is currently underway from North Devon Council, Torridge District Council, Devon County Council and Heart of the South West LEP.
- Communications
 - Initial meeting held (Peter Morrish, Sean Mackney, Bill Blythe) to clarify objectives and priorities on future communications needs for the region to improve regional branding for awareness of opportunities for young people and for future inward investment opportunities.