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**N E W S R E L E A S E**

**First of its kind report highlights Bucks’ skills priorities**

[Buckinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership](https://www.buckstvlep.co.uk/) (Bucks LEP) and [Buckinghamshire Skills Hub](https://bucksskillshub.org/) are delighted to launch the first ever [Buckinghamshire Local Skills Report](https://www.buckstvlep.co.uk/our-strategies/buckinghamshire-local-skills-report/), which is the ‘go-to’ document for everything skills-related within Buckinghamshire, bringing together evidence, strategy, information on current and planned initiatives and examples of best practice.

The 2021 Buckinghamshire Local Skills Report provides an analysis of Buckinghamshire’s skills and employment needs, identifies the priorities for public investment and sets out an action plan for skills development with the county for 2021/22.

Professor Gavin Brooks, Chair of the Buckinghamshire Skills Advisory Panel, said: “I am delighted to introduce the first Buckinghamshire Local Skills Report. The Report brings together an analysis of the County’s skills priorities and examples of local employer-education collaboration with the actions we believe need to be taken forward to ensure individuals and employers have the skills they need for future success. I hope the Report will be used by all organisations involved with the local skills agenda to help inform their decision making.”

The Buckinghamshire Local Skills Report is based on research undertaken on behalf of the Buckinghamshire Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) and will become an annual publication.

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The Report highlights key Buckinghamshire skills strengths which include: significant job growth anticipated in a variety of sectors; a strong collaborative culture (between education providers, and between employers and educators); further and higher education institutions with a strong history of business engagement, and a focus on applied learning and employability; high levels of qualifications amongst residents;

individuals with cutting edge engineering, technology and creative skills that cross sectors and can create opportunities for innovation; and clear long-term economic growth aspirations set out in Bucks LEP’s [Local Industrial Strategy](https://www.buckstvlep.co.uk/our-strategies/local-industrial-strategy/).

Having strong talent pipelines that meet the need of Buckinghamshire’s key sectors – construction, creative industries, life sciences, health and social care, space, and high-performance engineering - will be critical to the long-term success of the County’s economy. Other skills priorities identified for Buckinghamshire include: improving the work-readiness of young people leaving education and entering the job market; providing support to help individuals navigate the impact of Covid-19 on the job market; raising the digital skills of residents, the workforce and businesses; and attracting and retaining talent within the County.

To read the full Buckinghamshire Local Skills Report please visit: [www.buckstvlep.co.uk/our-strategies/buckinghamshire-local-skills-report/](http://www.buckstvlep.co.uk/our-strategies/buckinghamshire-local-skills-report/)

**Ends**

**Note to editors**

**Key facts/did you know?**

* There are high levels of self-employment within Buckinghamshire, particularly within the County’s creative and construction sectors. 1 in every 7 people working in the Buckinghamshire economy is self-employed.
* A key feature of the Buckinghamshire economy is the predominance of small businesses. 42% of the workforce work for micro firms (employing fewer than 10 people) compared to 32% nationally.
* There are twice as many creative industry jobs within the Buckinghamshire economy than the national average, many of which are in the film and TV sector.
* For every 10 people working in the life sciencessector in England there are 13 people working in the sector in Buckinghamshire.
* The Silverstone Technology Cluster, a world leading local cluster of high-tech businesses, has grown significantly in recent years. Over 4,000 companies operating in precision engineering alone are located within a one-hour radius of Silverstone.
* Those graduating from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Buckinghamshire are more likely to enter employment than the national average. In 2017/18, 66% entered full-time employment and 12% entered part-time employment. The corresponding figures for England being 59% and 10% respectively.

**Skills Advisory Panels** (SAPs) operate across the whole of England. They were established by the Department for Education in 2019 and are co-ordinated by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs). They bring together employers, colleges, universities, schools, apprenticeship training providers, employment agencies and other local stakeholders to understand current and future skills needs so that local skills provision better matches local employment opportunities and employers’ needs.

The Buckinghamshire SAP is co-ordinated by the Buckinghamshire Skills Hub, which was established by Buckinghamshire LEP, in partnership with Buckinghamshire Business First (BBF), to promote and optimises links between the local business community and education/training providers.

The [**Buckinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership**](http://buckstvlep.co.uk/) (Bucks LEP) is a business-led ‘partnership of equals’ between local government and the private sector, building the conditions for sustainable economic growth in the County.

[**Buckinghamshire Business First**](http://www.bbf.uk.com/) (BBF) is the Growth Hub for the county and is backed by Buckinghamshire-based entrepreneurs, thousands of SMEs, the Buckinghamshire LEP and Buckinghamshire Council. BBF provides the link between public policy and the business community in Buckinghamshire and works with partners to create a dynamic business environment in the Entrepreneurial Heart of Britain.

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