

Our mission

Skills for Work is the training delivery arm of Bradford Council. Our mission is:

Our purpose is raising aspiration and raising achievement. We do this by creating inclusive learning environment where all learners and staff are valued, inspired and confident. We do this because we all share a relentless determination that every learner can succeed.

We strive to have a positive impact on residents across the whole District, address skills inequalities and enhance everyone's equality of opportunity.

Our curriculum offer

Skills for Work offers a broad range of Apprenticeships, and adult, family and community learning to local residents in both our city centre location and in over 40 community settings.

Strong internal progression routes are in place from Entry Level to Level 3 from the Adult Education Budget and Level 5 Apprenticeships provision across a broad and responsive curriculum; designed in partnership with communities and employers, this curriculum is agile to the needs of the local residents and the District's labour market.

We deliver a range of engagement activity and accredited courses through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) in line with national strategic intent of the fund, and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's regional priorities (AEB is devolved to the Mayoral Combined Authority in West Yorkshire). Additionally, Skills for Work offers a suite of qualifications covering a range of vocational areas and employability skills to support unemployed residents of the District with their search for work.

Skills for Work is the preferred training provider for Apprenticeships within Bradford Council as well as delivering provision for other Local Authorities and external employers supporting learners to gain valuable skills and qualifications with the support of dedicated assessment officers. Apprenticeships are offered from Level 2 to Level 5 in the following vocational areas:

- Management;
- Team Leadership;
- Business Administration;
- Customer Service; and
- Public Service Operational Delivery.

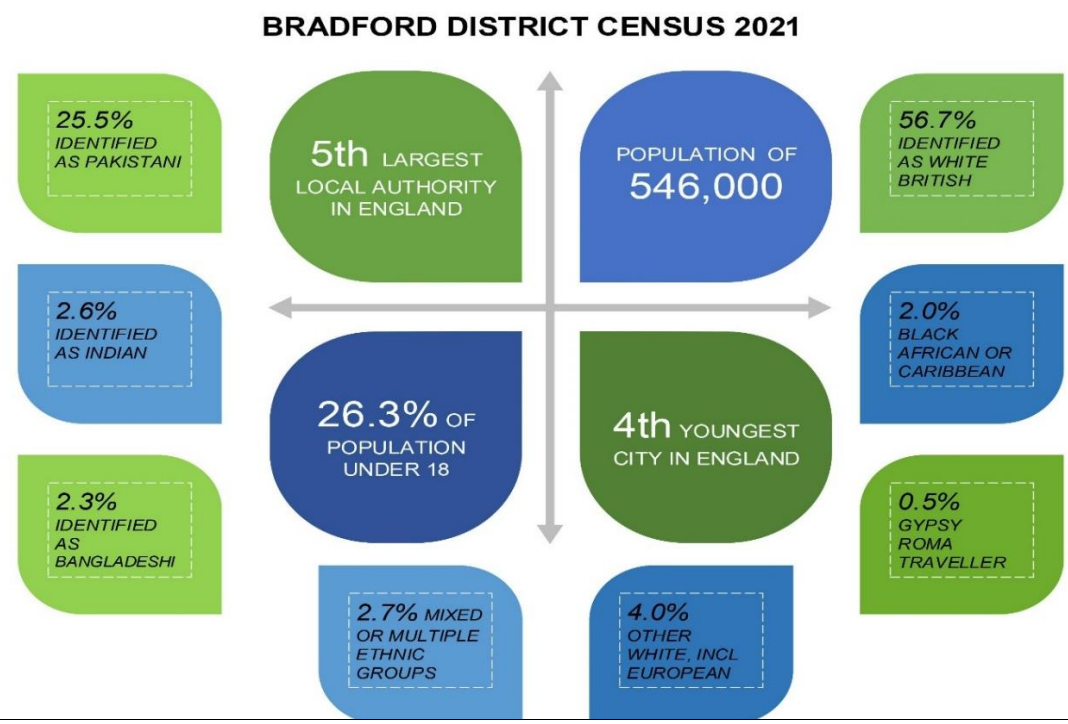
Our purpose

Our purpose is raising aspiration and raising achievement. We do this by creating inclusive learning environment where all learners and staff are valued, inspired and confident. We do this because we all share a relentless determination that every learner can succeed. Supporting our purpose is a commitment that we will:

- Deliver Outstanding Customer Service;
- Excellence in Teaching and Learning;
- Serve the Communities of Bradford and Keighley; and
- Provide a safe and enjoyable place to learn and work.

Our District: place and population

Bradford has a diverse, youthful and vibrant population living in a large urban area within the city itself, in the key towns of Ilkley, Bingley, Shipley, and Keighley each with its own distinct identity, and in addition around 70% of the district is rural with small village communities:



However, there are long standing employment and skills challenges. Bradford’s employment rate has consistently lagged behind the UK rate. The District’s Economic Strategy and Workforce Development Plan set the target of getting 20,000 extra people in work by 2030 to eliminate this gap. Alongside this despite some recent progress, gaps persist at each qualification level for our residents of working age:

- 12.3% of our working age population have no qualifications compared to a GB average of 6.6%;
- 54.4% hold a Level 3 (or above) qualification locally, this 61.5% for Great Britain;
- 35.8% are qualified to NVQ4 and above compared to 43.6% nationally.

(Annual Population Survey)

There is also clear inequality of opportunity and life chances across the District, with patterns replicated across key indicators including health outcomes, NEET rate, employment, and relative skills deprivation, with significant social and economic disadvantage adversely impacting the city centre wards, whilst the Wharf Valley is among the 10% least deprived areas in the country (IMD, 2021).

The District is home to over 16,000 businesses from micro through to the regional and national headquarters of major employers such as Morrisons, Yorkshire Water, Provident Financial and YBS.

Key stakeholders

Our approach in Skills for Work reflects and contributes to the Council’s strategic convening and place shaping role. Located in the Office of the Chief Executive and part of the wider Employment and Skills service, Skills for Work both benefits from and contributes to the Council’s extensive networks, partnership approach, and engagement resources and mechanisms.

The Council recognises that no single organisation can achieve our priority outcomes alone and that partnership and working together is central to our success. We have a passion to establish meaningful relationships that support and inform Skills for Work’s curriculum and the Council’s strategic approach. In developing our curriculum offer, Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement Plan, and creating our annual accountability statement we have engaged:

- A wide range of Council services, particularly local **elected members** and services to enable locality based delivery (eg **Libraries, Museums and Galleries**);
- **West Yorkshire Combined Authority**;
- Other **West Yorkshire Local Authorities**;
- Bradford Business Employment & Skills Board;
- **Bradford AEB partnership**;
- Employers and the Bradford Chamber of Commerce;

- **Yorkshire Learning Providers (YLP);**
- **Bradford 2025 (City of Culture);**
- Learners;
- Bradford Literature Festival;
- Schools; and
- **VCS organisations.**

Specifically, we have regular and detailed conversation with the partners and partnerships highlighted in bold above.

We are plugged into the strategic governance for the District. Skills for Work is an active member of the SkillsHouse Advisory Board (overseeing the local approach for adult skills, workforce development and employability), and the Bradford and west Yorkshire AEB partnership meetings.

This broad spectrum of engagement and connection to the Council’s strategic approach to employment and skills and the related priorities for the District enables us to consider the needs of communities, individuals, and businesses and to shape an agile curriculum that responds directly to their needs whilst delivering against key strategic frameworks such as the Local Skills Improvement Plan, WYCA Employment and Skills Framework and the Bradford District Plan.

Contribution to national, regional & local priorities

Skills for Jobs – The Council has reflected the priorities set out in the paper as the blueprint for the development of a curriculum that meets the needs of students, employers, and the community. We have built an agile, responsive, and engaging curriculum that supports the government’s key priorities:

- Putting employers at the heart of the system so that education and training leads to jobs that can improve productivity and fill skills gaps.
- Making sure people can access training and learning flexibly throughout their lives and are well-informed about what is on offer through great careers support (Skills for Work is Matrix accredited for CIAG)
- Simplify how funding is used so that residents can benefit from the full offer available to them without having to navigate the funding landscape; and
- Delivering excellent teaching in further education.

Levelling Up

Skills for Work’s offer incorporates the key elements of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee as set out in the Levelling Up White Paper, in particular:

- Multiply (numeracy); and

- Skills Bootcamp (occupation/vacancy specific; from 2023/24)

therefore, contributing directly contributing to the Levelling Up Mission to increase the number of people accessing high quality (Skills for Work has an overall Ofsted grade “Good”) skills training in every area of the UK. Skills for Work leadership support the White Paper’s recognition that workforce skills development and utilisation are critical drivers of the Levelling Up agenda.

Adult Education

The national intent and WYCA strategy for AEB informs our approach: to engage adults and provide the skills and learning they need to progress into, or within, work; and to equip learners for progression to other learning, including Apprenticeships. We offer flexible tailored programmes of learning, accredited and non-accredited provision, to support learners to engage in learning, build confidence, and/or enhance their wellbeing.

Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)

The Chamber of Commerce led Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Board has identified the following sectors which have the greatest demand for skilled employees in West Yorkshire:

- Health & Social Care
- Construction
- Logistics & transport/Distribution
- Low Carbon
- Financial & Professional Services
- Education
- Engineering & Advanced Manufacturing
- Creative Industries
- Digital & Technology

The draft priorities also identified the cross-cutting themes of Net Zero/Sustainability, STEAM, Transferable skills, Equality Diversity and Inclusion, Leadership & Management, as well as Digitalisation & Automation. Generic skills most in demand are communications, management, customer services and sales, whilst 400,000 adults in West Yorkshire lack foundation digital skills and nearly 0.5m workers lack essential digital skills for the workplace. Research also indicated 24% of all vacancies in West Yorkshire are skill shortage vacancies and many relating to higher skilled “STEM” professional roles.

There is a clear demand for language and fundamental communication, numeracy and digital skills and Skills for Work deliver functional English and maths, ESOL, and ICT. Additionally, we offer a suite of qualifications covering a range of transferable employability skills and vocational areas. Specifically in relation to the above priority sectors and skills, Skills for Work offer qualifications that contribute to: Financial and professional services, Digital and Technology, Customer Service, Education, and Leadership and Management.

Bradford District plans

Skills for Work's provision contributes to the Council's commitment in the District Plan to develop better skills, more and better jobs, a growing economy, to deliver a great start and good schools for all our children, and in alignment with the District's Workforce Development Plan, "People Skills Prosperity". A key focus for Skills for Work is working within our deprived communities to connect residents to good sustainable jobs and careers, directly reflecting a key theme of People Skills Prosperity in support of our District's strategic employment and skills targets for 2030:

- 20,000 more people in work; and
- 48,000 more residents qualified to Level 3.

Our Family Learning offer supports parents to help their children in education, enabling them to get a better start in life, and is a hook for people who may not have experienced education in the UK, or who had a negative experience of school to re-engage with learning to improve the range of opportunities life can offer them. Community Learning also delivers a wide range of benefits that contribute broadly to stakeholders' and residents' needs and ambitions, including a reduction in isolation, improved health and well-being, support with cost of living challenges and covid legacy, and community integration.

Bradford 2025 presents a generational opportunity to transform the local economy, drive economic growth, create jobs, and leverage funding and opportunity into the district. Skills for Work is developing provision to support our residents to access the opportunities that will be generated, including the development of a programme for volunteers.

What we know about our learners

Our learner surveys have indicated satisfaction of over 95% in the last two academic year. Critically, and in line with local, regional, and national priorities, including the EDI theme of the LSIP, we are very successful at reaching key and disadvantaged communities and demographics. In 2021/22 our formula funded AEB delivered to:

28% of learners on their first qualification

24% male and 76% female (women are more prevalent in the economically inactive and unemployed cohorts in Bradford);

76% from ethnic minority / mixed heritage;

18% declared a disability.

Our Objectives	
Skills for Work has set a number of key objectives for the short to medium-term to ensure we meet local, regional, and national priorities for employers, communities and residents for the duration of the current LSIP process. This is not everything we do, but some high-level and strategic, skills-focussed objectives.	
Aims & Objectives	Contribution towards National, Regional & Local priorities
Develop, commission, and deliver Multiply offer to individuals and communities, grow capacity for delivery of Numeracy provision.	Levelling Up funded provision with strategic oversight from WYCA and DfE. Fundamental workplace skill in demand across all sectors.
Growth of L3 curriculum offer and support district wide working group to maximise uptake of the provision.	Development of curriculum specialisms to meet local, regional, and national need. Increase number of residents with Level 3 in line with District level targets.
Determine and implement approach for Skills Bootcamp funding.	Support employers to recruit to skills shortage vacancies in line with LSIP and national intent to out employers at the heart of education.
To support those furthest from the labour market to gain the essential skills to increase progression to further learning, vocational skills development, and secure employment. Ensure all learners access appropriate learning support through better initial assessment and review processes.	Reflecting challenges in Bradford with unemployment and residents with no qualifications higher than regional and national averages, supporting inclusive growth ambitions of the Local Authority and WYCA.
Widen the Apprenticeship curriculum offer, targeted curriculum development to meet local employer and Council need.	Secure growth by meeting organisational and employer workforce requirements delivering in demand qualifications.
Liaise with other Council teams to develop and support inclusive pre-apprenticeship pathways into traineeships and apprenticeships especially for the most disadvantaged young people.	Tackles known local and national inequality of outcome for e.g., Care Leavers, young people with SEND, those who do not attain Level 2 by age 16. Supports inclusive growth/levelling up.
Develop reciprocal referral arrangements into learning/training or employment support for people of Bradford and surrounding areas	Challenges the complexity of the system in line with DfE priorities/consultation, local workforce plan and WYCA's Future Ready Skills Commission. Improves access for learners increasing access to skills employers need now, and improved learning and job outcomes.
Statement of sign off	

On behalf of the Skills for Work Advisory Board, we can confirm that we have reviewed the statement and that this meets the purpose and objectives approved by the Corporation at the annual review (date tbc). This statement was presented on the 25th May 2023. We are committed to the Annual Accountability process, and this will be built into the Board’s governance processes and annual programme of work.

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair, Skills for Work Advisory Board	Lee Pryor		
Assistant Director, Office of the Chief Executive, Bradford Council	Jenny Cryer		

This plan will be published on the Council website for the start of the 23/24 academic year

Hyperlink

Will be added to this page: <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/education-and-skills/skills-for-work/about-skills-for-work/>

Supporting documentation

- [Bradford Council District Plan](#)
- [Latest Ofsted report](#)
- [LSIP](#)
- [Bradford District Workforce Development Plan](#)
- [Bradford District Economic Strategy](#)
- [West Yorkshire Combined Authority AEB Strategy](#)
- [WYCA Employment and Skills Framework](#)
- [Skills for Jobs](#)
- [Levelling Up White Paper](#)