



Essex Employment and Skills Board

Update Bulletin 1:

May 2014



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Essex Employment and Skills Board

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Welcome to this first update bulletin of the Essex Employment and Skills Board; an overview of the remit, current activity and future plans of the Board. This update will be issued on a quarterly basis to all key partners including local business groups, schools, employers, providers and partner organisations. If you have any questions about the content, please contact the ESB Secretariat at EssexEmployment.SkillsBoard@essex.gov.uk

What is the Employment and Skills Board (ESB)?

The ESB was set up in shadow form in July 2013, with the remit to give employers a more prominent role in the publicly funded skills system to achieve the best outcomes for individuals and the local economy. The ESB ensured the correct focus by leading on a robust and comprehensive local Evidence base for Skills which has helped to identify key growth sectors now and in the future. Now established as a 'Full' Board, the membership includes companies from all growth sectors and members have agreed some key priorities, for which progress is outlined below.

Further information about the ESB and copies of the full Evidence Base can be found at <http://esb.essexpartnership.org>

Who are the current Board members?

Association of Secondary Heads in Essex, Richard Thomas

Cadman Group Ltd, Alan Cadman

Case New Holland, Colin Larkin

Castle Point & Rochford NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Dr Sunil Gupta

Cwind Ltd, Daniel Smart

e2v technologies, Andrew Bennett

Essex County Council, Councillor Kevin Bentley

Hallmark Care Homes, Gemma Todd

High House Production Park, Andrea Stark

Oakley Global Business Solutions, John Gladman

Park City Consulting, Tim Price (VICE CHAIR)

Raytheon, Suzanne Jude (CHAIR)

South Essex College, Angela O'Donoghue

Stansted Airport, Daniel Gallo

University of Essex, David Stanbury

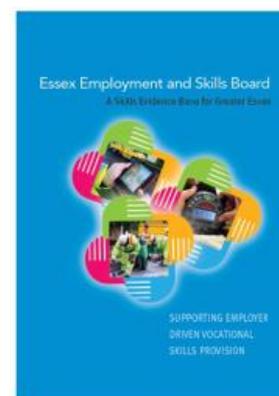


What are the Board's priorities?

1. Increase the level and effectiveness of partnerships between providers and employers
2. Create a balanced approach to training provision across Essex to better ensure the needs of employers and young people are met
3. Establish mechanisms to identify the needs of employers and create a critical mass for providers to respond to
4. Improve the perception and understanding of the career pathways within our priority sectors to encourage young people to enter them
5. Increase opportunities for young people to gain and demonstrate crucial employability skills
6. Establish and influence ways in which employers in Essex can have a prominent voice in how funding is used for skills and employment support

What has the Board achieved so far?

- ✓ A robust, **comprehensive local Evidence Base** (pictured right) has been produced outlining all sectors and all local areas with their skills needs now and in the future – this is continuing to be developed and is helping to inform careers information
- ✓ **Website developed** and expanded to share information and news
- ✓ **Business Engagement** through an employer event in December 2013 and attendance at local events and groups
- ✓ **Meeting with MPs** (November 2013) to highlight skills issues at a national level
- ✓ **Formal links** with other **Government structures** primarily the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) covering Essex, Kent and East Sussex. The ESB will put forward priorities to the LEP for funding
- ✓ **Securing funding** for activity through Essex County Council and Southend Borough Council (£1.05 million). The ESB have recommended initial spend on a training grant for employers recruiting, expanding the STEM¹ in Schools programme, local industry information for schools and Continued Professional Development (CPD) for schools and colleges. Contact the ESB Secretariat for further information (essexemployment.skillsboard@essex.gov.uk)
- ✓ **Development of solutions** including early development work for the web portal (pictured right) to enable businesses to access and rate training providers across the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area
- ✓ Setting up **Sector Action Groups** for the key growth sectors so that feedback can be gained from the wider business community (update below)
- ✓ **Engaging with Essex Schools** and school Governors through attendance at events, meetings and newsletter updates



¹ Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths

Spotlight on the Evidence Base for Skills

The ESB Evidence Base is nearly 200 pages long, includes local Sector and Area Profiles and is continuing to be developed. It was established using a wide range of published statistics and information as well as utilising feedback from local employers about their skills needs. This enabled the Board to agree **seven key growth sectors** which have skills needs now and in the future. These are: **advanced manufacturing and engineering, IT and technology, creative, health, care, construction and logistics**. Some headlines are as follows:

Did you know?

- There are 1.7 million people in Greater Essex², set to increase to 1.9 million by 2021
- Greater Essex has over 63,000 PAYE and VAT registered businesses
- The Essex economy generates a gross value added (GVA) of £30.1bn
- Essex has high numbers of companies and employees in construction, health, education, advanced manufacturing & engineering
- Challenges include nearly 10% of working age people with no qualifications and nearly 110,000 people on out of work benefits
- Opportunities include major developments such as London Gateway (Tilbury), Harwich International Port, Harlow Enterprise Zone and significant housing growth which will all have an impact upon future skills needs
- The Construction sector locally employs over 40,000 people in 11,000 companies. Employers have fed back skills shortages. With over 50,000 new homes due to be built across Essex and an ageing workforce, demands on the sector will continue to grow.
- Nearly 40,000 people in Essex work in advanced manufacturing and engineering with employers including e2v Technologies, Raytheon, Ford, Case New Holland, Selex Galileo and BAE Systems. Local employers have fed back skills needs in mechanical, electrical engineering and product design
- **The IT and technology sector has a wide range of vacancies** for roles such as Web developers, support engineering, C# Developer and Software developers. From March 2013- March 2014, there were over 13,000 vacancies across Essex relevant to the sector
- **The care sector has current skills shortages and consistently high vacancy levels.** Essex has an ageing population; over 320,000 people in Essex are over age 65, which is projected to increase so the challenges are considerable.
- **The health sector has continued to see high levels of vacancies** locally with nearly 10,000 from March 2013-March 2014. Roles range from Nurses and Occupational therapists to Dentists and Healthcare assistants.
- **Essex is home to nationally significant clusters of creative companies** and has the third largest creative sector in the UK. Growth areas are in Music and Visual and performing arts, Design, Advertising, Publishing and Architecture



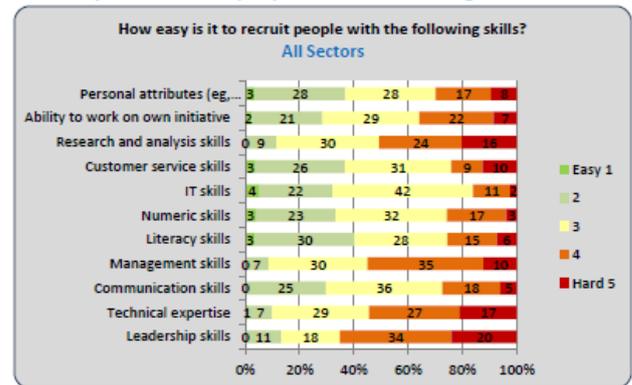
Find out more at <http://essexpartnership.org/content/essex-skills-evidence-base-summary> and <http://essexpartnership.org/content/essex-sector-skills-profiles>

² The term 'Greater Essex' refers to the local authority areas covering Essex, Southend and Thurrock

Listening to Essex employers: Greater Essex Skills Survey Results

An important aspect of the Evidence Base research was finding out from local employers what their skills needs are now and in the future. This included feedback on skills, recruitment, opportunities, challenges, current and future growth. Combined with published statistics, this has enabled a more holistic picture of local need. A report is now available outlining the results to date, which is available on the ESB website at <http://essexpartnership.org/content/useful-info>. The ESB will continue to capture feedback from local companies, including surveys undertaken by partner organisations and through ongoing dialogue with the wider business community.

How easy is it to recruit people with the following skills?



Headlines from the survey include:

- Leadership, management, technical expertise, research and analysis have emerged as key skills shortages across all sectors
- Where companies felt that training offered locally did not meet their needs, this was predominantly due to a lack of practical skills and training failing to keep up to date with the sector
- The image of many of the local growth sectors is proving to be a barrier to recruitment
- 79% of companies indicated that they need to go outside Essex to recruit and people with industry specific qualifications and with experience are the most difficult to recruit



The ESB priorities outlined above will play a vital role in addressing the issues raised by local employers. Increased awareness of the opportunities and skills requirements of the growth sectors will help to facilitate change and ensure that employer needs are met.

ESB Sector Action Groups: Progress

As outlined in the Board achievements above, Sector Action Groups have been set up for each of the key growth sectors so that barriers and solutions can be agreed with the wider sector to better reflect needs. Each group is led by a Board member and first meetings are taking place in June and July for an initial report back to the ESB meeting on 25th June.

Sector Leads and Groups:

Construction, Alan Cadman, Cadman Building Group

Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering, Colin Larkin, Case New Holland

Health, Dr Sunil Gupta, Castle Point & Rochford NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

Care, Gemma Todd, Hallmark Care Homes

Creative, Andrea Stark, High House Production Park

IT & Technology, John Gladman, Oakley Global Business Solutions
Logistics, (TBC)

The first Care sector meeting was held on 20th May in Chelmsford and led by Gemma Todd (Hallmark Care Homes, ESB lead for Care). The meeting was well attended by Care sector employers from across Essex and discussions included the negative perception and lack of awareness of the sector among young people and the benefits of engaging schools to convey the opportunities for progression and wide range of available roles. Employers also cited some challenges around entry to local nursing and health degrees and the complexities of funding for the sector. Statistics prepared for the group illustrate a high number of vacancies in the sector.



The first Construction sector meeting was held on 22nd May in Colchester and led by Alan Cadman (CM Cadman group, ESB lead for construction). Similarly to Care, the image of the sector was seen as a barrier as well as a lack of knowledge by parents, young people and teachers particularly with regard to professional careers and roles in construction. Emerging solutions therefore include awareness raising and input to careers information. The simplification of apprenticeships (and funding) was also agreed as a key priority. Where higher level skills are required, the view of employers was that degree programmes that offer industry experience alongside academic study would be most beneficial.



LinkedIn groups are being developed for all sectors to enable wider discussion and feedback and links will soon be available via the ESB website.

The **next Sector Action Group meeting** will be for **Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering**, led by Colin Larkin (Case New Holland) on **3rd June 2014** at 10.30am at Case New Holland in Basildon.

If you are an employer in one of the growth sectors and are interested in contributing to the Sector Action Groups, contact us at EssexEmployment.SkillsBoard@essex.gov.uk

Forthcoming activity:

- **28th May:** ESB update at **Braintree Employment and Skills Board**
- **3rd June:** Sector Action Group, **Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering**, Basildon
- **6th June:** ESB Presentation by Tim Price (ESB Vice Chair) at **Castle Point Regeneration Partnership**
- **7th June:** ESB Secretariat presentation on growth sectors and developing careers tools, **Young Essex Assembly (YEA)**
- **25th June:** **ESB Full Board meeting**, High House Production Park
- **4th July:** ESB Presentation by John Gladman (IT Sector Lead) at **Maldon Business Forum**
- **October:** ESB Updates by Suzanne Jude (ESB Chair) and Tim Price (ESB Vice-Chair) at **School Governors meetings** October 13th (Colchester), October 15th (Harlow), October 16th (Chelmsford) and October 20th (Wickford)