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Evaluation of Careers Yorkshire and the Humber

# Inspiration Activity and Good Practice Guide

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## Executive Summary

The International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS) at the University of Derby was commissioned to evaluate Careers Yorkshire and the Humber's inspiration activity between April 2016 - March 2017. The purpose of the evaluation was to capture staff and stakeholders' views of the operation of inspiration activities and make suggestions for the development of this work.

The research suggests that Careers Yorkshire and the Humber (CYH) is continuing to make good progress in its inspiration work and fulfilling the expectations that it set itself in its Inspiration plans. Whilst celebrating its continuing achievements CYH is set on a journey of improvement and is actively seeking to continue to work collaboratively with partners, to make the most of its networks, to continue to provide impartial, labour market information and to grow the infrastructure to meet the needs of young people and their parents and advisers for reliable career-related information and support activities. The context for CYH's inspiration work during 2016-2017 has become more complex as more organisations and services become available. This presents challenges but also opportunities which CYH appear to have grasped with enthusiasm.

The inspiration activities reported here reveal that CYH's success owes much to its ability to develop, collaborate and partner with others in the delivery of the inspiration agenda and there is much good practice to observe. That this work is having an impact is evident in interview respondents' positive comments, many of whom were able to offer suggestions for inspiration work (see Areas for Development and Recommendations). These suggestions are provided below as recommendations because respondents were inspired to contribute their ideas in response to innovations begun by the inspiration work of CYH. The breadth and specificity of recommendations suggests a very real desire to continue to develop inspiration work in schools and colleges.

## Recommendations

### *Developing*

- There should be a dedicated marketing budget for inspiration activities and there should be a strategy of supporting local messaging at national level.
- Time and resource should be allocated to the further development of Shape Your Future materials including information about occupational pathways and routes.
- Consider developing a resource to assist young people to discern what is reliable LMI
- Continue to provide LMI resources in a variety of formats including hard copy, and consider developing resources specifically aimed at parents and employers.

- Develop the accessibility of the website by providing local ‘LMI stories’ and updating content.
- Consider making the criteria for inclusion of web-links to other (than CYH) careers materials more explicit.

### ***Collaborating***

- Allocate resources to supporting teachers/tutors to use LMI materials in the curriculum.
- Explore the feasibility of short teacher placements to local industry.
- Identify resources to support schools and colleges to evaluate the effectiveness of careers work delivery.
- Allocate resources to support the development of evaluation tools and instruments (e.g. based on Gatsby Benchmarks).
- Initiate local dialogue about what localism and cold spots mean in practice and how these can be best defined.
- Make explicit how quality frameworks (e.g. Gatsby Benchmarks) can work alongside notions of impartial careers information, advice and guidance.
- Continue to work collaboratively with local partners in the development and implementation of a careers offer for all young people across the region.

### ***Partnering***

- The Skills Funding Agency should clarify its objectives for inspiration in 2017/18 and articulate what is expected from the National Careers Service relative to other government-funded initiatives in careers work.
- Use Opportunity Area funding to support teacher development in inspiration work.
- Consider developing long-term strategic aims for inspiration.
- Consider the development of key performance indicators (or success criteria) for inspiration work for the short, medium and long-term.
- Clarify the parties that would need to work together to achieve continuity in inspiration activities.
- Clarify the relationship between inspiration and other initiatives such as the mentoring project.

## Context and methodology

The International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS) at the University of Derby was commissioned to evaluate Careers Yorkshire and the Humber's inspiration activity between April 2016 - March 2017. The purpose of the evaluation was to capture staff and stakeholders' views of the continued operation of inspiration activities and make suggestions for the development of this work.

The Coalition Government's vision for Inspiration Activity (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2013) made clear that careers education concerns aspiration as much as advice, that mentoring and motivation should come from people in jobs, and that employers, schools and colleges must do more in partnership together. The National Careers Service (NCS) plays a key role in bringing this about and from 2014 additional funds were made available for the NCS to stimulate inspiring activities for young people in schools and colleges. With the transfer of responsibility for careers education and the demise of the Connexions career services following the 2011 Education Act, schools and colleges have had to develop careers education practice and deliver inspiring activities to meet their particular local needs; the work of the NCS within the 'inspiration agenda' is aimed at helping them do this.

This report forms a continuation of an evaluation of the early operation of inspiration activities (Artess, 2016) which was taken into account by Careers Yorkshire and the Humber (CYH) in designing its inspiration plans for 2016/17.

## Evaluation approach

This evaluation comprised an examination of a range of administrative data provided by Careers Yorkshire and the Humber (CYH) in order to understand the policy background for the CYH Inspiration Plans and align programme data to the evaluation questions.

The second and major part of the evaluation comprised face-to-face or telephone interviews with CYH staff involved in delivering the inspiration agenda, and stakeholders in schools, colleges, businesses, professional bodies, trade unions, local government and other relevant agencies. A total of 20 in-depth interviews were conducted. As previously CYH plan to use the 2017 evaluation formatively to improve and extend its offer; CYH noted in their planning documents for inspiration activities in 2016/17,

*As our [inspiration] plan is about brokerage and awareness-raising, much of the measurement of success rests on qualitative evaluation.... We will disseminate a Good Practice Guide from this to our stakeholders in Yorkshire and the Humber and to other [NCS] Prime Contractors through the Prime Contractors Inspiration group. We will respond flexibly to the results of evaluation to strengthen key areas.*

## Research questions

The evaluation was again aimed to address the following broad research questions:

- How does the inspiration activity complement and supplement other initiatives aimed to support progression into employment and training?
- Does the inspiration activity increase understanding of the labour market and the range of work and employment opportunities that are available?
- What are the strengths and development areas of work undertaken under the Careers Yorkshire and the Humber inspiration plan?
- What do staff and stakeholders think is 'good practice' and what kinds of activities are working well?

## Inspiration plans for 2016/17

Careers Yorkshire and the Humber's plans for inspiration activity are again stretching (see Appendix A) and are framed to address the key themes articulated by government through its Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA):

- Localism
- Cold spot focus
- Apprenticeships
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) careers
- Digital by default
- Making sense of the inspiration landscape
- Regional
- Community strategy

## Changing context for inspiration activities

Since the last evaluation CYH have continued to develop inspiration activities alongside a strengthening number of partners and collaborators who share an interest in the preparation of young people for work and/or further education and training. The stimulation for this growth in careers-related activity is in part attributed to the role of the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) working with and through Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), local authorities (LAs) and others. In particular, the CEC-funded network of Enterprise Coordinators has now become well-established across the Yorkshire and Humber region and Enterprise Advisers (nominated employers) are linked to most of its schools/colleges. One of the recommendations made in the previous evaluation was to,

*Clarify the relationship between the National Careers Service under the 'inspiration agenda' and the work of the Enterprise Coordinators and Advisers.*  
 (Artess, 2016:4)

Professionally qualified Partnership Coordinators (x 4) and Partnership Coordinators In Custody (x 4) remain the major impetus for inspiration work within CYH, and with an increasing number of 'actors' in careers work the Partnership Coordinators' unique contribution has consolidated them as 'careers experts' within a complex web

of inter-related services and agencies. One respondent noted that inspiration activities are one of a range of initiatives in careers work at the moment, and that these would work best if linked in a structured way. Other recent initiatives impacting on inspiration activities include:

### **Mentoring**

In January 2016, the Government announced the launch of a national mentoring campaign that aims to link new mentors with pre-GCSE young people at risk of disengaging and under-performing as evidence shows that providing mentor support to young people at risk of disengagement can help to motivate and inspire them to reengage and perform (Careers and Enterprise Company, 2016a). Mentoring can also encourage social mobility and improve life chances. The CEC is coordinating this campaign by facilitating links between schools and colleges, employers, mentoring organisations and young people. They are providing funding to mentoring organisations to increase the number of high-quality, employer-led mentoring relationships across England to ensure that all young people at risk of disengagement in the run-up to their GCSEs have a mentor in place by 2020.

### **Apprenticeship levy**

Another development is the introduction of the apprenticeship levy in England. The new arrangements begin to come into effect on April 6<sup>th</sup> 2017 and will require employing organisations with a pay bill in excess of £3m to pay a 0.5 per cent levy which will create an anticipated fund of £2.5bn from which to pay for apprenticeship training. The new system will operate on the basis of employers having digital accounts from which they can draw down funds to pay for apprenticeship training. Digital accounts will include a 10 per cent 'top up' from government. The majority of employers (i.e. small-medium sized enterprises) will not need to pay the levy; they will instead receive a separate package of financial support from government. There will be arrangements for small employers to claim the full cost of apprenticeship training and specific support packages to help meet the costs of training very young (16 – 18 years) apprentices, and young people (19 – 24 years) who have been in care, as well as those living in areas of social or economic deprivation. Employers appear to support this.

*Employers with fewer than 50 people working for them will be able to train 16 to 18 year old apprentices without making a contribution towards the costs of training and assessment up to the funding band maximum. Instead the government will pay 100% of the training costs for these individuals. Nine out of ten non-levied employers responding to our survey agreed or strongly agreed with this proposal, with only 4% disagreeing. A significant majority of levied employers (79%) and providers (81%) also agreed.*

(Department for Education, 2016:14).

For the CYH inspiration team, the new levy arrangements will add impetus to their focus on apprenticeships and provide another vehicle for employer engagement.

### **Opportunity areas**

In October 2016 the government announced its intention to develop six Opportunity Areas one of which is to be Scarborough. By January 2017 a further six areas,

including Bradford and Doncaster were added bringing the total to 12. The aim of Opportunity Areas is to ...*build young people's knowledge and skills and provide them with the best advice and opportunities* (Department for Education, 2017).

It is envisaged that Opportunity Areas will be aimed to enhance opportunities for social mobility; the CEC is also providing some of its Careers and Enterprise Fund to support initiatives in those areas. Whilst the rationale for the selection of Opportunity Areas is based on a range of indicators of social mobility, there appears to be some synergy with cold spots identified by the CEC who noted that some areas within CYH's patch were amongst the most cold.

*The range across all the LEPs of employers participating in work inspiration activities varies from 11-25%. 12 of the 39 LEPs fall into the "bottom third" range where fewer than 16% of employers in that LEP were involved in any work inspiration activities in the last 12 months. Only 5 of these LEPs had "bottom third" indicators on both employer engagement in work experience and work inspiration. These were Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Cumbria, Humber, Worcestershire, and York and North Yorkshire. (Careers and Enterprise Company, 2015:9)*

CEC research had identified that cold spots were often associated with rural and post-industrial areas (Careers and Enterprise Company, 2016b). Several of our survey respondents' own experiences supported this association. One felt strongly that cold spots, although articulated via a range of indicators, remained poorly defined in practice or at institutional level. The respondent queried whether a school in which students regularly achieved strong GCSE results and which had no external input about careers would comprise a cold spot. At present there appears to be uncertainty about what a cold spot is.

### **Professional practice developments**

Several respondents in this research mentioned the Gatsby Benchmarks (Gatsby Foundation, 2014), Digitise My Career (Ambrose, et al, 2016), and the current North Yorkshire and York evaluation of the 'Putting the Learner First - Progression for Success' project (Moore et al, in press). Each of these professional practice developments has been utilised by Partnership Coordinators to engage schools and colleges in thinking about careers work.

The Gatsby Good Career Guidance report drew together existing research, explored good practice overseas and examined the current state of practice in both independent schools and the state sector in England. Through this methodology, the report was able to propose an evidenced-based way forwards for schools that was not dependent on a particular policy framework. The report's strength lay in its clarity and simplicity. A vast array of research, international practice and theory was encapsulated into eight Benchmarks which describe high quality school based careers programmes. The Gatsby Benchmarks are that schools/colleges should have:

- A stable careers programme
- Learning from career and labour market information
- Addressing the needs of each pupil
- Linking curriculum learning to careers
- Encounters with employers and employees
- Experiences of workplaces
- Encounters with further and higher education
- Personal guidance

In the original research the Gatsby Charitable Foundation concluded that very few schools were meeting all of these Benchmarks. Even on a relaxed measure of compliance only 1% of schools surveyed met all of the Benchmarks. This suggested that the Gatsby Benchmarks were likely to be stretching for many schools.

Since the publication of the original report the Gatsby Benchmarks have become very influential. They have been widely discussed in policy circles and have been publicised to head teachers and careers leaders in schools. However, until 2015 there had been no systematic attempt to implement the Benchmarks in schools, nor had there been any evaluation to establish what impacts might result from the implementation of the Benchmarks.

*Digitise My Career* is a set of materials for teachers and tutors to help individuals aged 11-18 develop their online employability skills, or their digital career literacy. The resource is designed to be used mainly in career education programmes for students in schools and colleges, though it could also be used in other settings and not only with young people. The resource will help students develop their digital career management skills (DCMS). Digital career management skills have evolved from the concept of digital career literacy introduced by Professor Tristram Hooley at the University of Derby. Hooley suggests that the internet is shifting the context within which individuals pursue and develop their careers. He introduces the internet as:

- a careers library through which individuals can search and source information
- a marketplace where individuals can find and apply for opportunities in learning and work
- a space for establishing and maintaining contacts and networks
- a media channel through which individuals can raise their profiles and manage reputations.

To take advantage of the career opportunities the internet offers individuals need to develop their digital career literacy to research, to make contacts and to build a positive professional reputation. Hooley sets out a framework of seven competencies, the seven C's of digital career literacy:

- Changing - the ability to understand and adapt to changing career contexts
- Collecting - the ability to find and retrieve career information
- Critiquing - the ability to evaluate, analyse the provenance of and assess the usefulness of career information
- Connecting - the ability to make contacts, build relationships and establish

- networks online that support career development
- Communicating - the ability to interact across a range of different platforms and to understand the 'netiquette' of different interactions and to use them in the context of careers
- Creating - the ability to create online content that represents your interests, skills and career history
- Curating - the ability to develop, review and edit your online presence.

This particular development resonates well with the government's aim for CYH's inspiration (and other) work that it should be delivered via a communications strategy that is 'digital-by-default'.

The *Putting the Learner First- Progression for Success* project is evaluating careers education and guidance in 17 schools in North Yorkshire and 3 schools in the City of York in the North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and the York, North Yorkshire, and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership (YNYER LEP) area. The project was conceived as a way to improve the outcomes for young people in North Yorkshire through the development of career and enterprise provision. The project evaluated by iCeGS at the University of Derby offered a unique opportunity for schools in the area to come together to share this practice and to develop new approaches which meet their very distinctive needs and those of the young people they support.

#### **Local economic regeneration**

City regions in Yorkshire and Humber focussed on economic generation are influencing policies and practices across the region. For example:

Since 2014 Leeds City Region has developed the 'More Jobs, Better Jobs' partnership which aims to reduce poverty by creating jobs, specifically jobs that allow people to move through the labour market. Funding is allowing the partnership to conduct research and develop new policy and practice to encourage growth and develop new opportunities (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Leeds City Council and Leeds City Region LEP, 2014).

In 2015, a commission of independent national experts was formed in order to assess what could be done to ensure that Doncaster's education and skills system was able to equip its residents and businesses for changing times, from childhood and through adulthood. The commission concluded that seven key characteristics would need to be operationalised in order for their education and skills system to be effective: great distributed leadership; a 'whole person, whole life' focus; create local, all age careers and employment guidance system; achieve the national Quality Mark for careers guidance; promote ambition and aspiration; provide outstanding teacher CPD; foster a commitment to creativity and inclusivity; and communicate with and celebrate Doncaster citizens. (Independent Commission on Education and Skills in Doncaster, 2016).

A 25-year vision for Sheffield City Region was launched in February 2017. This vision is underpinned by six priorities:

- Innovation and enterprise – creating an ecosystem, building on the region's

strengths in innovation and manufacturing, including advanced manufacturing, engineering and logistics.

- Global excellence – local impact, ensuring the region is outward-looking but maximises the local impact of investment through the development of local supply chains.
  - Joining-up health and well-being, creating a region known for its healthy and active population through tackling health inequalities.
  - Transformation in education and skills, achieving across-the-board improvement in education to build a region known for the talent and skills of its people.
  - Promoting the regional green network, ensuring the city region is better known, inside and out of the region, for the outstanding quality of its environment and lifestyle.
  - Better internal and external connectivity, radically transforming the quality of the region's physical and virtual connectivity so it becomes a hinge-point for the movement and distribution of goods and people for Britain.
- (Sheffield City Region, 2017).

Work is currently being undertaken by stakeholders in South Yorkshire to develop a new Sheffield City Region Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy that will describe careers and inspiration work under three headings of 'entitlement', 'infrastructure' and 'employer leadership'. The report is due to be published in May 2017.

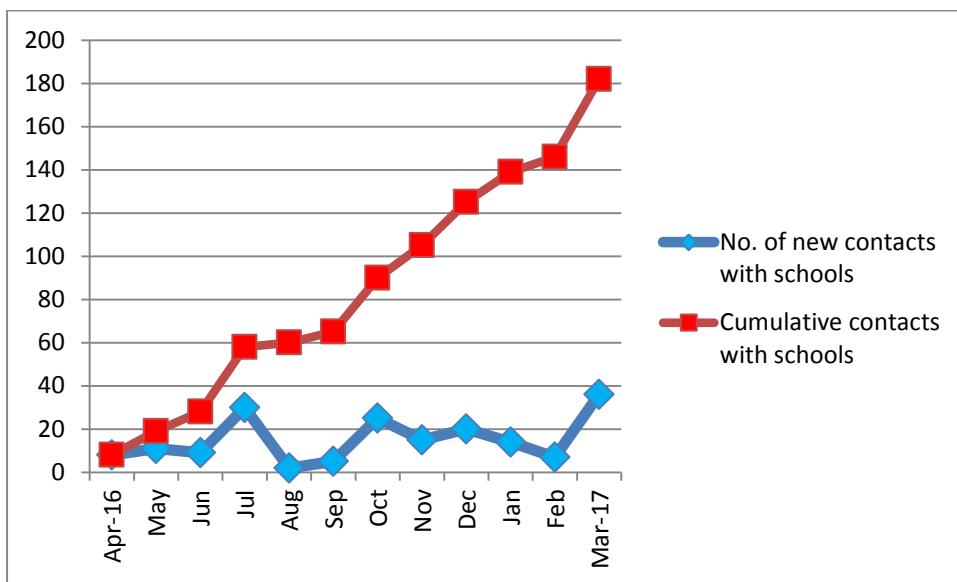
All these recent initiatives, selected as examples, bode well for a broad intensification of interest in inspiration activities; they also provide CYH with a challenge to ensure its contribution is best-placed and effective. Working in partnership, building and sustaining relationships remains a key feature of CYH's inspiration work and their brokerage and awareness-raising role is extending.

### **Extending the reach of inspiration work**

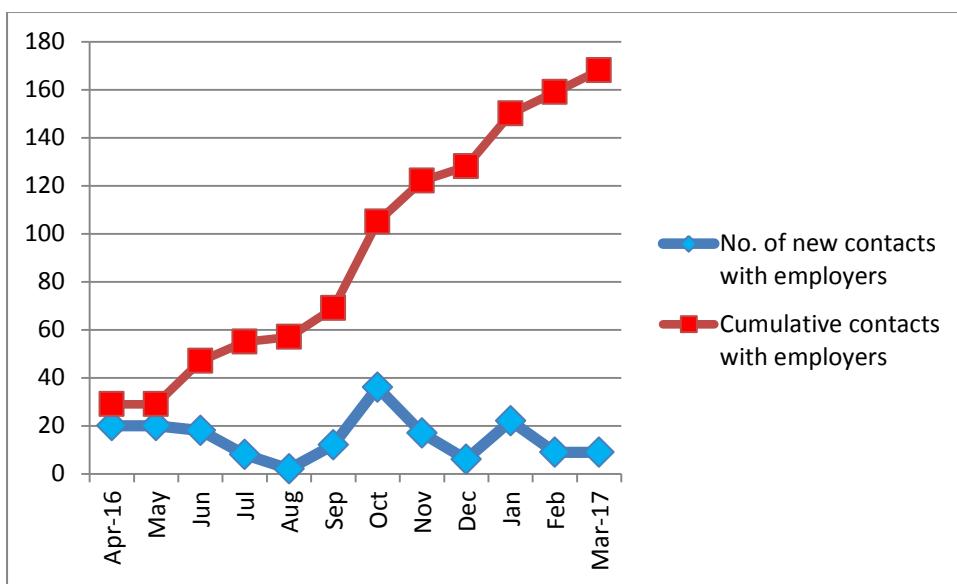
Careers Yorkshire and the Humber is required to submit monthly returns to ESFA identifying achievements against the inspiration activity plan. The following data are captured: key monthly milestones; progress against milestones; status of milestones (i.e. completed/on-going/not started); highlighted activities and issues.

Data in respect of new contacts (potential partners) made each month together with the cumulative number are collated for new contacts with schools, employers, and training providers, councils, LEPs and education trusts. NB: e-mailshots or meetings of large groups (e.g. groups of teachers or employers) are not reckonable; only meetings with individuals or small groups may be claimed as such interactions are thought to better reflect engagement in inspiration activities. Figures 1- 3 demonstrate the scale and pattern of the establishment of new contacts during the period.

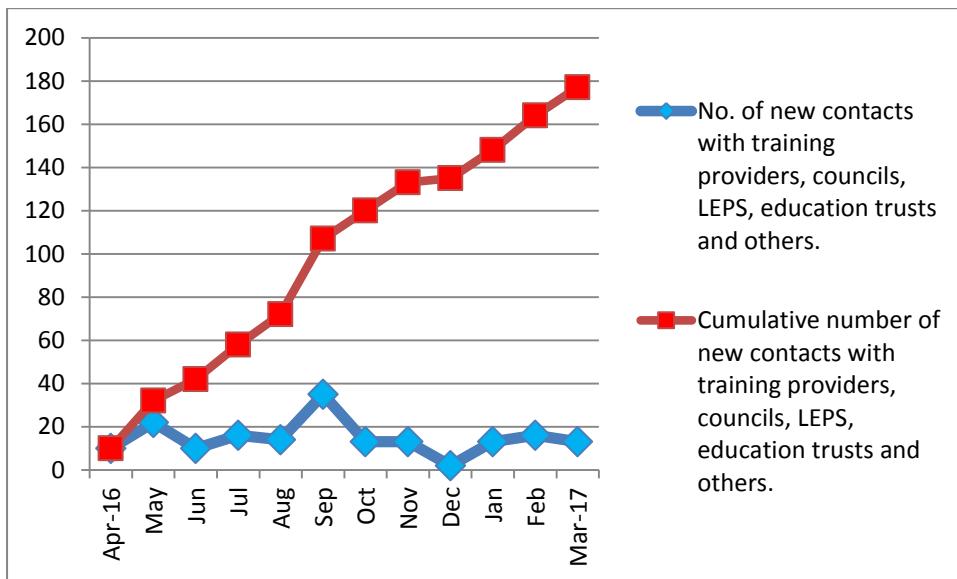
**Figure 1: New and cumulative contacts with schools**



**Figure 2: New and cumulative contacts with employers.**

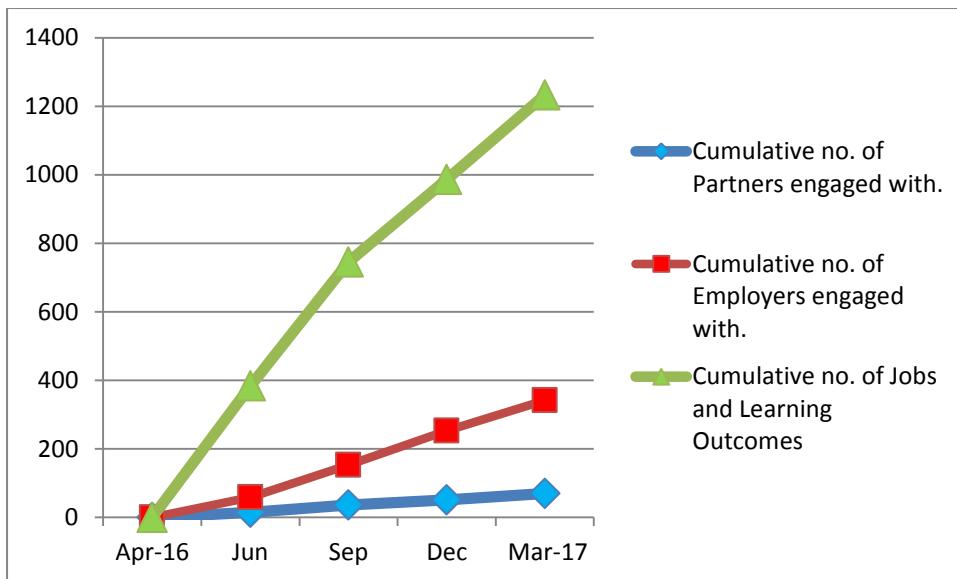


**Figure 3: New and cumulative contacts with training providers, councils, LEPs education trusts and others.**



Substantial numbers of new contacts have been made during the period. It is interesting to note the pattern of new contacts during the year, with CYH making more new contacts in schools in June/July, October and March, and with employers also in October, and new contacts with training providers and others being more likely to be made in the Spring and around September.

**Figure 4: Cumulative number of Partners and Employers engaged with and Jobs and Learning Outcomes.**



The achievements of the In Custody inspiration team are recorded quarterly and include CYH's engagement with partners and employers together with the job and learning outcomes of customers. Figure 4 demonstrates particularly strong progress on engagement with employers over the period.

## Findings

The findings reported here represent the key messages from the in-depth interviews conducted as part of this evaluation. Findings are reported in three sections focusing on evidence that the Inspiration Activity work undertaken by Careers Yorkshire and the Humber National Careers Service is characterised by the way it,

- Develops
- Partners
- Collaborates

Good Practice in Inspiration Activities is captured as a fourth section – the Good Practice Guide, which can be read independently of the full report and aims to describe both staff and stakeholders' views of good practice.

### Develops

The inspiration activity of CYH is now in its third year. It is not our intention here to rehearse the achievements of a year ago but to instead focus on what has been developed or is developing.

### Labour market information

One of the perceived strengths of CYH's inspiration work last year was the creation and dissemination of labour market information (LMI). This work has continued apace and respondents' comments indicate they are delighted with the Shape Your Future labour market materials. The materials are presented in an accessible A5 sized brochure which is described as giving schools something "*tangible*" to use in the curriculum and which is "*real*" and shows which sectors are growing in the localities. There are four versions of Shape Your Future to reflect the sub-regions covered by CYH and there are plans for further development of the materials for parents and young people.

One impetus for the development of Shape Your Future was a report by City and Guilds which reported a comparison of the career aspirations of over 3000 young people and labour market predictions for the next 5 – 10 years. The research suggested that aspirations do not match those jobs that have been predicted to exist. The findings also suggested this is because of a lack of good career guidance and meaningful encounters with employers. The young people were reported to be heavily in favour of attending university despite many of them not knowing what they would study and only 33 per cent of the available jobs likely to be graduate level. It would seem then that young people need a broader understanding of the predicted labour market, more encounters with employers and increased awareness of the range of post school options available to them and how they can lead to employment and career development (City and Guilds, 2015).

Respondents expressed the view that nationally produced LMI can be useful and sites like Go Construct are particularly helpful to those seeking information on specific sectors. The challenge to CYH's aim for localism is to also provide local LMI that is accurate and attractive, avoids becoming too parochial, and enthuses schools and colleges about local opportunities; talent retention remains a key objective for

LEPs. For example, Doncaster Airport is part of an expanding logistics infrastructure in the region but few young people understand the freight and distribution sector. One respondent thought that one way to inspire young people to consider opportunities in this sector is to reveal labour market facts such as, the airport's runway is the only one in the UK long enough to land Beyoncé's freight plane. Similarly Rotherham's developing bio-mass plant is set to provide a range of opportunities that schools/colleges need to be aware of and can be discussed in the curriculum in relation to its impact on sustainable energy.

There was consensus amongst respondents that LMI needs to be a mix of local, regional and national to provide effective inspiration. It was also reported that schools and colleges welcome LMI in both on- and off-line formats. Schools have used their own funds to order additional bulk hard copy supplies of Shape Your Future booklets to distribute to pupils and parents as well as subject teachers, and requests made for posters and other materials such as lesson plans are being responded to.

Careers Yorkshire and the Humber have now integrated the inspiration web portal with the CYH general web portal in part as a response to its digital by default aims and also in response to concern that LMI in the nationwide National Careers Service (NCS) website has been radically diminished.

*[the NCS website] ...is awful, inaccessible to young people and it was so good before. All the job roles have been cut down. It's utter rubbish, I don't use it now. They say it's a work-in-progress but it looks rubbish, like applying for a passport. It should be led by the audience – young people can't cope with text-heavy information".*

In contrast the CYH site was described as useful, very good, of value to both young people and adults, and aimed at meeting local needs.

*"[CYH-produced LMI is]...really useful, really informative. From a local authority strategic point of view it fits really well with skills and enterprise ....super, valuable resources"*

User statistics are now able to track visitors' progress around the CYH website and user feedback underpins modifications and developments which respondents clearly welcomed

It was reported that employers are also interested in the LMI produced through the inspiration agenda as their knowledge of the local labour market can be circumscribed by their own industry and supply chains. A respondent felt that businesses prefer to transact via face-to-face contact and do not turn to the internet for labour market information.

Partnership Coordinators' focus is shifting towards the delivery of continuing professional development (CPD) to accompany the production of LMI materials and to enable teachers/tutors in schools/colleges to use resources effectively. There remains concern that there are so many materials '*out there*' that teachers find it difficult to know how and what to use.

### **Expertise in careers**

The number of Enterprise Advisers (nominated business contacts) attached to schools and colleges has expanded considerably during the last 12 months. However, one respondent felt strongly that although progress in getting employers into schools is to be welcomed - often to provide a specific project, session or recruitment activity related to their enterprise - employers are not qualified careers professionals. What is needed within inspiration activity is the “...careers work sensibility and expertise” provided by the Partnership Coordinators; employers cannot be expected to have this. Employers are experts on enterprises and CYH provides trained, impartial careers expertise – together they are described as making a powerful team.

However, another respondent felt that the work of the Enterprise Advisers and Enterprise Coordinators added an extra layer of complexity for institutions and is potentially making inspiration work harder to achieve.

Several respondents welcomed the CEC initiatives with caution. Whilst comments indicate that the relationship between Partnership Coordinators in CYH and Enterprise Coordinators is strong and complementary of one another's expertise, one stakeholder (outside CYH) suggested that the CEC should be renamed the Enterprise Company and should do more to “*respect others' professionalism*”. Another (also outside CYH) questioned the effectiveness of the CEC and suggested its work should be evaluated and that there should be long-term strategic planning of (inspiration) developments without which current gains could easily be lost. It was noted that Enterprise Coordinators were employed by different organisations (e.g. LEPs, Chambers of Commerce, LAs) and that this could introduce subtly different agendas for inspiration work across the region.

Such views could be a function of the embedding of new arrangements. The Partnership Coordinators remain ebullient and focused on responding to perceived needs. One said:

*“I’m like a heat-seeking missile, like Ralgex ...I identify the cold spots and focus my attention there ....”*

One commented that their work with Enterprise Coordinators was strengthening.

*“On the 5<sup>th</sup> July the local EAN hosted an event to celebrate the first full year of the project....the Chief Executive of the CEC, Claudia Harris, attended the event so I was able to get a photograph with her and explain how the partnership works and how we have been able to work together to create some much-needed LMI materials.”*

### **Quality**

Partnership Coordinators are active in promoting the take up of careers Quality Awards and through networking events and personal contacts are introducing institutions to broader developments such as the Gatsby Benchmarks, Digitise My Career and other frameworks.

Some stakeholders indicated a concern for schools' ability to maintain their resource commitment to careers work in light of possible changes in the way schools are

funded. Quality careers provision for schools is achievable but it demands that resources are expended by schools. One respondent noted that where schools are unable to allocate resources to develop careers work, it is not the fault of external providers that quality careers work is not achieved; there may be a pressure on schools to accept careers provision that is free of charge.

Another suggested it could become increasingly difficult for schools to meet their statutory obligations, and that there is an on-going need to not only monitor quality in delivery of careers provision in schools and colleges but also to provide staff development to support this. One respondent suggested that many professionally-trained career practitioners are “*of a certain age*” and there is an urgent need for succession planning. Yet another indicated that in some institutions careers work is still being undertaken by staff without resources or training.

In custody Partnership Coordinators are working hard to find out what offenders need on release and to coordinate with what prisoners have been provided with elsewhere during their sentence (often at another prison). A system of collecting feedback from offenders via forms and focus groups is leading to changes in practice. One respondent felt that prisons are like schools and colleges; institutions with a life and culture of their own and that key individuals working there can have significant impact. An example was given of a catering manager who had inspired the development of a community-run café and by so doing provided valuable work skills for prisoners.

In custody careers networking events organised or supported by the inspiration team are increasingly well-attended by prisoners. These events attract employers into prisons and enable post-release work placements to be developed.

## **Partners**

The previous report emphasised the way Partnership Coordinators work through and with others in external organisations. Respondents in this evaluation reported the strengthening and extending of those relationships.

### **In Custody**

One stakeholder reported that inspiration work in prisons is facilitating the work of agencies working in the community to support ex-offenders. For example, Partnership Coordinators made contribution to employability courses, provided 1-2-1 career guidance, made referrals, supported prisoners’ CV building, supported agencies to apply for clearing to visit prisons, introduced employers willing to employ ex-offenders, etc., and effectively broadened and extended the reach of community based ex-offender support agencies.

In Custody Partnership Coordinators aim to develop strong working relationships with a range of partners, including: employers, training providers, voluntary organisations, social enterprises, DWP in the community and In Custody, offender rehabilitation agencies, housing associations, the NCS in the community as well as learning and skills leads (including NOVUS) within prisons. One stakeholder felt that inter-disciplinary partnership is particularly valuable for In Custody inspiration work as prisoners have multiple needs that are not easily met by any single agency.

### In the community

In the community, Partnership Coordinators regularly attend meetings of the Enterprise Advisers Networks (EAN) and other careers, education, information and advice (CEIAG) networks to input labour market and other careers-related information. Stakeholders described the Partnership Coordinators as being strong, charismatic networkers who are willing to share information. Another felt that CYH's inspiration work ensures that [the institution] gets involved in what is happening locally and facilitates understanding of what good career guidance is.

Partnerships with government agencies appear to be strengthening. For example, it was reported that In Custody Partnership Coordinators are working in collaboration with Work Coaches in the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). One respondent explained that the introduction of Universal Credit will mean that job-seekers leaving prison will need to be able to "*hit the ground running*" as it will no longer be possible for them to make benefit claims in advance of their release. Consequently Work Coaches will increasingly rely on partnership with CYH for local labour market information and their ability to give 1-2-1 careers advice.

The National Careers Service and JobCentre Plus (JCP) share operational imperatives; i.e. the support of those who are (or who are at risk of being) furthest from the labour market, and the support of in-work career progression. Rather than engender competition it was reported that these shared goals had increased partnership working and reduced duplication of effort. CYH's information and communications team produce a quarterly newsletter for staff working in JobCentre Plus which showcases partnership work working, news and events.

The range and scope of partners engaged with through inspiration work is potentially huge. Even the same type of partner may not have the same needs or the same level of engagement with inspiration activity. This requires the inspiration team to be flexible in how they present themselves to partners and how they interpret what 'inspiration' means in practice. At a very basic level some stakeholders did not understand the term 'inspiration' at all. One such respondent commented:

*"I'm at a bit of a loss with all the different organisations ....actually as a school the majority of students stay on and go to university so we don't have a lot who go into an apprenticeship".*

A respondent at another institution felt there were already well-established links with local employers through the provision of work experience, and a sense of what good career guidance is through understanding the Gatsby Benchmarks, but was not at all sure what 'inspiration' is. Within this relative confusion there is scope for misinformation. Another respondent, for example, thought the former Connexions budget had been handed over to the CEC and wanted to know what was the CEC is doing with it. The challenge of explaining the evolving careers landscape is further proof Inspiration Partnership Coordinators provide a valuable service helping address misconceptions.

One way to ameliorate this position is to better publicise inspiration work and the partners to it. In one sub-region the EAN had helpfully captured key partnership relationships on a single page (see page 21).

Visually and in practice CYH's work is positioned to underpin and complement the development of careers and enterprise in the locality.

## The Enterprise Adviser Network in Rotherham – Key Partners on a Page –

People who support development and delivery of careers and enterprise locally.

**Enterprise Coordinators:** Recruit and match schools with Enterprise Advisers; develop and maintain school/EA partnerships, facilitate and monitor the review and action planning process; focus EAN on increasing quality and quantity of employer encounters; facilitate EA Network; liaise with project partners, e.g. JCP in Schools, National Careers Service/Careers Yorkshire and the Humber (CYH) ; formalise role of business volunteers as 'Industry Champions'; signpost Careers and Enterprise Company resources/activities, Refer EAs/schools to partners and providers; ongoing programme development.

Enterprise Advisers	JCP in Schools	Industry Champions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the development of a whole school/college strategy for careers, enterprise and employer engagement.</li> <li>Provide access to local business networks/contacts to schools and refer to ECs and JCP in Schools.</li> <li>Help partner school/college to focus efforts on programmes and activities that are most effective in motivating young people, supporting independent choice and positive outcomes.</li> <li>Develop a relationship with the school which will support the sustainability of careers and enterprise provision.</li> <li>Attend local, regional and national learning and networking opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to business/employer networks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Arrange talks at assemblies</li> <li>-Arrange attendance at jobs fairs/careers events</li> <li>-Source work experience opportunities and employer visits</li> <li>-Identify traineeship and apprenticeship opportunities</li> </ul> </li> <li>Work with students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-CV advice</li> <li>-Support with job applications</li> <li>-Mock interviews</li> <li>-Group employability sessions</li> <li>-1:2:1 support</li> <li>-Career paths</li> </ul> </li> <li>Work with Teachers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Labour market advice – what occupations are recruiting in your area, now.</li> <li>-Career paths, progression routes and opportunities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Source through online platforms such as Inspiring the Future, Founders4Schools, StemNet Ambassadors, Speakers for Schools.</li> <li>Rotherham Youth Enterprise Young Ambassadors can go into schools and describe self-employment skills, opportunities and support.</li> <li>Support the delivery of careers activities in schools such as; careers talks, skills fairs, networking, enterprise activities, employer led curriculum learning, mock interviews, workplace visits and work experience.</li> <li>Motivate young people, support independent choice and positive outcomes.</li> <li>Provide access to local business networks/contacts to schools and refer to ECs and JCP in Schools.</li> <li>Take part in regional and national learning and networking opportunities where appropriate.</li> </ul>

**National Careers Service;** Provides labour market and careers information via [www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](http://www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk). Information and advice (webchat, email telephone service) to young people via the National Contact Centre ring 0800 100 900.

**CYH Inspiration Agenda;** Partnership support for schools across South Yorkshire including planning of careers activities, working towards Careers Quality Awards, LMI materials and advice re latest careers policy and practice.

## **Collaborates**

Working in partnership implies working in collaboration. The Oxford English Dictionary defines to collaborate as, to work jointly on an activity or project. Careers Yorkshire and the Humber's inspiration work is manifestly working jointly on a range of activities and projects with partners who share its goals and responsibilities. However, effective collaboration can also be achieved by accommodating subtly different goals and responsibilities amongst partners; this seems to characterise CYH's approach to inspiration work.

One of the aims for inspiration work in 2016/17 has been to 'make sense of the inspiration landscape'. This is a challenging aim because the landscape is becoming increasingly complex and brings with it the capacity for both duplication and omission as partners interact and develop their own specific goals. CYH's skills in achieving effective collaboration appear to hinge upon three inter-related aspects: i.e. that they are professionally qualified, manage job role boundaries effectively and aim to develop good practice.

## **Professionally qualified**

CYH's inspiration work is undertaken by professionally qualified careers practitioners, all of whom are highly experienced. As qualified professionals they are guided by ethical principles – key amongst these is impartiality. This principle leads, for example, to the production of local labour market information or information on career pathways which is comprehensive, as to promote a single labour market option or pathway would risk partiality or introduce bias.

One respondent explained that whilst it is currently government policy to promote the take up of apprenticeships for example, professional careers guidance practice holds that it is one of a range of options that impartial careers information and guidance can help individuals to understand. Several respondents offered the view that CYH's major contribution to inspiration is owed to its commitment to meet local needs through the lens of practising impartial careers work.

Interpreting what are local needs is done on the basis of local knowledge. For example one Partnership Coordinator has been successful in establishing local careers networks where none had flourished before, in locations that were not previously thought to be cold spots because CYH was aiming to "*do what is right*" for the locality. Another respondent commented that there have been a number of recent initiatives that have led to good practice in careers work in schools and colleges, but insufficient attention has been given to rolling out learning to schools and colleges in which careers work is less well-developed. This is one of the reasons why Partnership Coordinators encourage schools/colleges to work towards Quality Marks, and why one described school and college partners' "*eyes lighting up*" when they were introduced to the way that the Gatsby Benchmarks could be used as a framework to structure careers work.

## **Management of role boundaries**

The localism aim means that CYH's inspiration work is tailored and Partnership Coordinators work differently in different locations and with different partners. Consequently managing role boundaries is an on-going task in order to target where help is most needed and optimise existing collaborations. This has resulted in a

continuing need to provide inspiration activities that take account of what is happening in the immediate locality, and to “*complement and add value*”.

One respondent felt that the Partnership Coordinators’ brokerage role was still needed and that local employers would welcome a “*go-to place for employment and careers...an over-arching service*” providing support with recruitment, labour market information, work experience, redundancy advice, *and* inspiration and that this should be the National Careers Service as no other collaborator is providing this. But the boundary between inspiration work and other careers activities is unclear; the very complementarity of the work of Partnership Coordinators can render their own role less visible. One commentator suggested that what is needed is a great deal more PR aimed at clarifying who does what within the inspiration agenda.

The digital by default aim ensures that resources are freely available online to all partners. The previous inspiration portal (now joined with the CYH main portal) has been effective in signposting users to a wide range of online resources whilst falling short of endorsing them. So far the focus of online resources for inspiration has been to support those working *with* young people but there is an increasing awareness of the need to collaborate on the production of online resources *for* young people (and parents).

## Good practice guide



## Inspiring materials

The major good practice initiative in the current year has been the development of the Shape Your Future materials. The first version was produced for South Yorkshire by the inspiration team at Careers Yorkshire and the Humber (CYH) with the support of funding from the Sheffield City Region LEP; it was designed in Doncaster, and launched at an Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN) event in July 2016. Feedback so far has been overwhelmingly positive:

*"It's a fantastic resource. I have already used it in introduction lessons with my A-level engineering group this morning. Thank you."*

*“It fills a real gap in information”.*

*"I really like the layout and information in your Shape Your Future booklet and leaflet. I think it is a really useful tool to use with young adults and even their parents/carers to show them the skills and opportunities available to them."*

*“The materials are presented in a really user friendly way and the way the key points are highlighted really makes the resources effective in getting the information across. The posters are really useful particularly with many resources only available at a cost or at least the price of printing in colour which is restrictive on school budgets”*

*“Just looked at Shape the Future materials for South Yorkshire. They look fantastic and well presented. I work in N. Yorkshire. Is there similar materials for this area?”*

The Shape Your Future (SYF) brochure has now been customised for each of the sub-regions in the CYH area, namely, the Humber, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire and provides tailored information as follows:

- About the area and introduction.
- Changes in the labour market.
- Sectors x 12 (e.g. Construction and property; Healthcare technologies)
- Jobs in the future.
- STEM
- Skills
- Attitudes
- Further information, and
- Local contacts.

Information presented in the brochure makes good use of infographics and local data and is aimed to appeal to young people and their advisers/influencers in schools and colleges and at home. The following image is of a sector page.

Types of job	National average salary
Air cabin crew	£24,955
Coach driver	£25,968
Hotel manager	£32,473
Chef	£20,479
Events manager	£30,001
Waiting staff	£14,203
Travel consultant	£22,604

**Skills/qualities**

- Customer service
- Communication
- Cooking
- Problem solving
- An interest in travel
- Knowledge of the area

**Useful subjects include;**

- Maths, English and ICT
- Business
- Languages
- Food technology

**Some local employers**

- Arriva
- Best Western Pennine Manor Hotel
- Cafe Nero
- Easy Jet
- National Media Museum
- Temple Newsam House and Farm

**More information...**

[www.yorkshire.com/places/west-yorkshire](http://www.yorkshire.com/places/west-yorkshire)  
[www.hospitalityguild.co.uk](http://www.hospitalityguild.co.uk)

Disclaimer: Content in this booklet and the Shape Your Future posters have been researched by CYH staff. No copyright or other rights are reserved. CYH staff may copy material from the posters for internal use only. CYH staff may not copy material from the posters for external distribution without permission or obtain any responsibility for the contents of the posters.

You can download and print a copy of the Shape Your Future booklet and posters at: [www.careersyandh.co.uk/inspiringyandh](http://www.careersyandh.co.uk/inspiringyandh)

Visit the **National Careers Service** website for information on a wide variety of careers: <https://nationalcareerservice.direct.gov.uk>

**LEP** LEEDS CITY REGION ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

**Careers** Yorkshire and the Humber

Part of the National Careers Service, in Yorkshire and the Humber

By using inspiration funding and contributions from the EAN monies, it has been possible to produce posters linked to the sector information, and to distribute multiple hard copies to schools and other stakeholders. SYF is also available on the CYH website in flip file and PDF formats, and individual pages can be downloaded and saved, thus enabling teachers in schools and colleges to access 'bite sized' chunks

of labour information specific to their curriculum. Users of the materials not only like the content and format but comment that the materials are saving them “*....an enormous amount of time trawling through your website to find this information*”, and are already being used across the curriculum.

*“Each mentor (form tutor) of which we have 75, will be provided with a booklet to help support students in their mentor group with regards to future career ideas. Each teacher of PSHCE Careers will be provided with a booklet for use during lessons. The posters have been reproduced and pass to relevant subject teachers to display in their classrooms, along with a copy of the booklet. The full set of posters are on display in the Careers area.”*

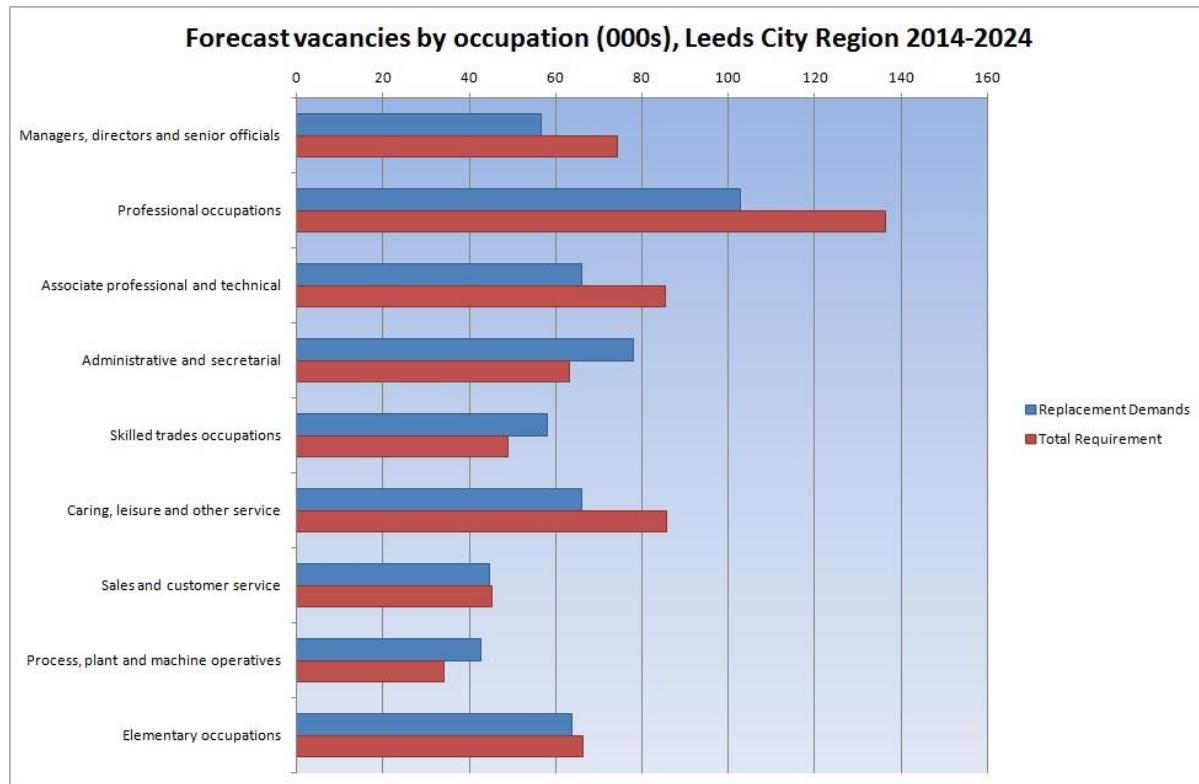
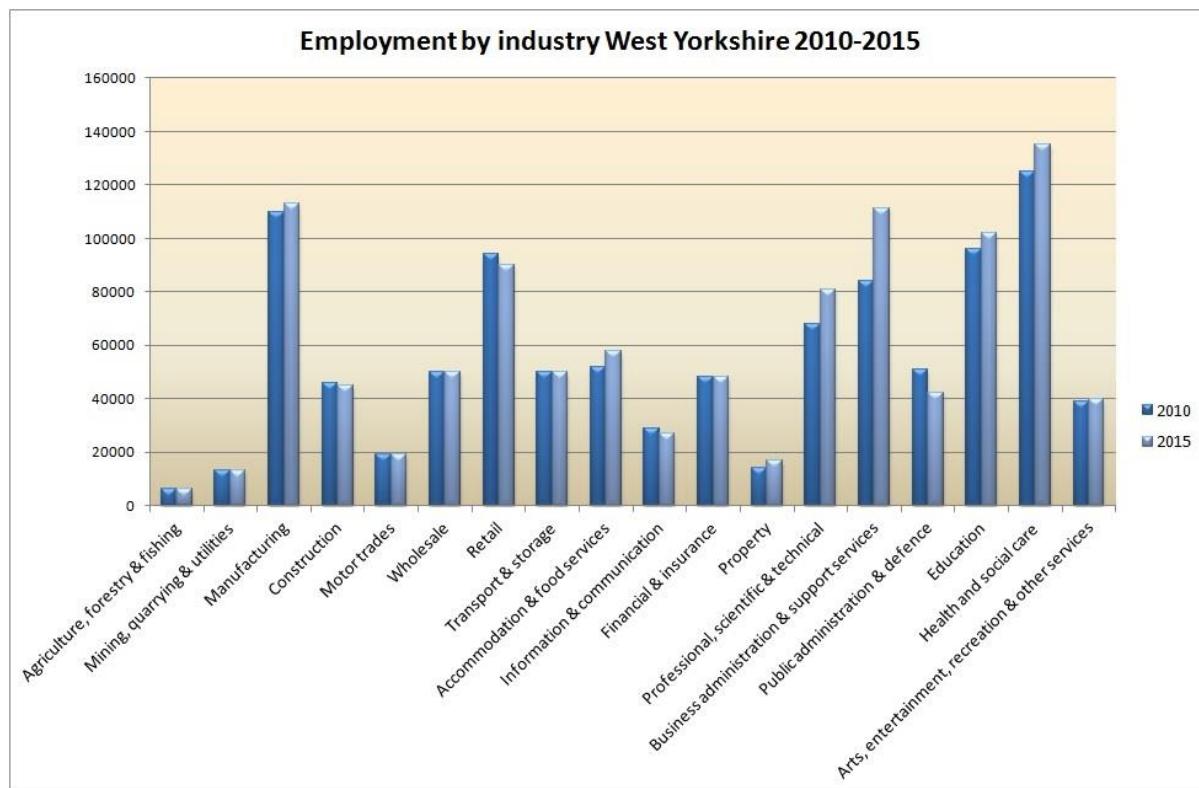
Teachers both in the locality and elsewhere in the UK (e.g. London) have requested lesson plans to support the SYF materials. “*Anything you can email me to look at, get ideas from, adapt etc. would be really useful*”. Another respondent commented that the SYF materials have “*changed everything*.”

Future plans for SYF include, the inclusion of more information about small-medium sized enterprises, apprenticeships, routes and pathways and a CV/interview preparation page. This will increase the size of the brochure by 4 pages. It is also intended to develop the marketing of these materials to ensure that they are used more widely. Partnership Coordinators have made presentations about the materials at network meetings across the region which has promoted shared understanding of the language of economic growth and labour market information (LMI) and used the materials to support teacher continuing professional development (CPD).

Currently Inspiration Newsletters<sup>i</sup> provide users of SYF with additional information and narrative with which to inspire young people. The inspiration newsletters are part of a series of newsletters emailed out to CYH partners and stakeholders.

One of the gains from combining the inspiration web portal with the CYH web portal, (now badged ‘Inspire, Empower, Progress’) has been that users can access materials more easily. A wide variety of case studies of inspiration work in practice are also available on the website.

As reported previously (Artess, 2016) the range of LMI resources developed by CYH is extensive. The image below shows two examples of additional labour market information which is accessible to any user of the website. The first image shows employment by industry across West Yorkshire and reveals relative proportions of employment in each sector, as well as how these have changed since 2010. The second shows forecast vacancies in the Leeds City Region up to 2024. For schools and colleges, the capture of longer-term data on employment trends may be even more valuable than that which shows immediate vacancies; longer term trends are likely be of value in planning career pathways at 16 or 18 years.



## Inspiring practice

The effectiveness of the personal relationships between the Partnership Coordinators and the Enterprise Coordinators was generally acknowledged; joint membership of the Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN) appeared to have facilitated productive dialogue and proved to be a valuable channel of communication. An example of EAN meetings being held at different employer premises was offered as a simple but effective way for school/college staff to get out and meet employers.

One Partnership Coordinator was “*thrilled*” to report that Enterprise Coordinators were using the SYF materials with employers and wanted to build upon the materials in future. Another reported that one of the universities in the region was planning to use SYF materials with students to promote the take up of higher apprenticeships. One is working with a local authority to develop an apprenticeship hub and is developing a ‘learning from LMI’ area of the website. A stakeholder felt that inspiration work bodes well for future Opportunity Area work and ‘localism’ in practice.

*“I’ve got some useful professional contacts – the whole concept of inspiration is really, really pleasing”.*

Whilst these views are clearly borne out of practical interactions with Partnership Coordinators and others in the CYH, what they also suggest is that inspiration work is developing strategic thinking about careers work across the region, or as one respondent described it as being more joined-up. Partnership and collaboration hinges upon teamwork and good communications. One respondent felt that “teamwork is one of our strengths at CYH. Everyone works together to make sure that we’re the best we can be.”

The In Custody inspiration team have made progress this year on the development of ‘Resettlement Hubs’ which bring together and encourage interaction between agencies supporting offenders to return to the community on release.

Progress has also been made on delivering ‘Inspiration Resettlement’ events inside prisons, where prisoners have the chance to meet employers as well as advisers. The inspiration team have created their own LMI identifying which employers are prepared to support offenders. They work closely with employers, including one who offers ex-offenders a 2 week placement which can be extended, with government funding, to a 12 week accredited placement. Whilst careers events of this sort are common in schools and colleges, the logistical challenges Partnership Coordinators In Custody overcome in making the events happen can be considerable. For example, the inspiration team has negotiated that employers attend careers events without being finger-printed, but employers are not allowed to take in mobile phones or laptops which means that travel and other plans are made well in advance. But the effort was worthwhile, “*inspiration events create a real buzz*” and demonstrate that CYH is approachable and can be trusted with the task of supporting offenders into work when they leave prison.

Prisoners’ views of inspiration events are very positive. In general they agree that,

there was a good mix of employer and learning providers; the information was useful and helpful; the event was well-organised; the event helped me to plan my next steps; and they feel more positive and motivated after attending the event. In particular prisoners enjoyed:

*“Actually speaking to people what can help me when I get out, give me a chance and maybe get work.”*

*“Speaking to new employers and careers people for the opportunity to gain work on release”.*

*“I have found this useful, and would feel that if you had a tangible goal to aim for this would be so constructive for prisoners, that knowing upon release you had a future.”*

*“That there is help out there for ex-offenders.”*

Similarly employers, partners and training providers value the inspiration events:

*“Very positive conversations and also a networking opportunity for all organisations.”*

*“We had lots of referrals and got positive feedback regarding our service. It worked very well.”*

*“This was my first time in a prison. Meeting and chatting to the prisoners was so interesting and it was good to see all the other stands and see what else was available for soon to be released prisoners.”*

*“I met with a chap yesterday [who] attended your event at [HMP] Whealstun....he said the event was really useful, gave him loads of job ideas.”*

Partnership Coordinators attend Re-offending Strategy Group meetings in prisons to develop contacts with key workers, and work closely with training providers to make sure that in-prison education takes account of the labour market that offenders will emerge into. They also act as the link with the CYH in-community service, display job vacancies in prisons, lay the foundations for later work to track offenders progression into the labour market, triage prisoners on the basis of release dates, contribute to inductions and create case studies of offenders progressing successfully which inspires employers to engage. As one of them commented, *“...there’s a lot going on at the moment in prisons.”*

## Inspiring quality

In the previous evaluation the inspiration team was described as skilful, expert and inspiring; this continues to be the case. Stakeholders again described the team as very well networked, careers-focussed, knowledgeable about skills gaps locally and comments such as, *“I think they’re fantastic to be honest”* were not uncommon.

Over the last year they appear to have continued to intervene in their localities to

meet local needs and to stimulate partners to raise their game. This emphasis on quality enhancement has resulted in Partnership Coordinators becoming involved in a wide range of development activities. The following is illustrative:

- Supporting and encouraging schools and colleges to work towards a Quality Mark and seek formal accreditation.
- Participating in a ‘ban the box’ initiative to obviate the need for offenders to declare their offence at the beginning of a job application.
- Supporting a women-into-engineering initiative which attracted 400 women to a single event.
- Introducing more experienced partners to their less experienced counterparts in school and colleges for the purpose of offering mentoring and support.
- Providing staff development events to help staff in schools and colleges use Shape Your Future materials.
- Working with a careers education development project and promoting the use of the Gatsby Benchmarks research as a framework for auditing careers work in schools and colleges.
- Attracting influencers in schools and colleges to attend network meetings.
- Working across LEP areas and involving partners from different sub-regions.
- Remaining impartial and avoiding an over-emphasis on any single route or pathway.
- Supporting local mentoring initiatives.
- Encouraging employers to conduct mock interviews in prisons.
- Supporting community action, such as the Junk Food Project.
- Bringing inspirational speakers into prisons, schools and colleges.

Respondents’ comments indicate that CYH’s inspiration work is being focussed strategically and practically in line with where they believe they can have the best impact. Their model of brokerage and working with and through others continues and as one of them commented, “...we’ve worked our 5 per cent really hard.” One stakeholder felt,

*“....without them we wouldn’t be able to provide the service we do.”*

## Areas for development and recommendations

Respondents would welcome more inspiration work and one felt that the uncertainty surrounding the continuation of it was unhelpful. In general respondents appear to want more, not less, inspiration activity carried out by impartial, trained experts in careers work. This suggests an overall satisfaction with Careers Yorkshire and the Humber's inspiration activity and what has been undertaken so far. There is a thirst amongst the inspiration team to continue to innovate and develop more inspiration work in partnership with others in the region. Relationships are strong and the infrastructure for development has become stronger, if more complex, in the last 12 months. However, at the time of the evaluation, there remained uncertainty about priorities for inspiration work in the approaching year.

- The Skills Funding Agency should clarify its objectives for inspiration in 2017/18 and articulate what is expected from the National Careers Service relative to other government-funded initiatives in careers work.

One of the features of an operating model that champions brokerage, flexibility, and responsiveness to local needs is that it can acquire low visibility as each partner engages with only a 'slice' of the activities. Specifically, respondents suggested that there should be more focus on publicising the achievements of inspiration; this would not only consolidate CYH's contribution, but would also disseminate good practice more widely.

- There should be a dedicated marketing budget for inspiration activities and there should be a strategy of supporting local messaging at national level.

Several respondents would like to see more Shape Your Future and other materials developed specifically for an audience of young people. Some felt that staff in schools do not have time to interpret LMI and are in need of stand-alone materials for students, and classroom support materials for teachers.

- Time and resource should be allocated to the further development of Shape Your Future materials including information about occupational pathways and routes.
- Allocate resources to supporting teachers/tutors to use LMI materials in the curriculum.
- Consider developing a resource to assist young people to discern what is reliable LMI.

Whilst the CYH website is very much welcomed, some respondents felt that the ‘digital by default’ principle does not work well for teachers, employers and parents with little time to browse.

- Continue to provide LMI resources in a variety of formats including hard copy, and consider developing resources specifically aimed at parents and employers.
- Develop the accessibility of the website by providing local ‘LMI stories’ and updating content.

Some respondents felt that teachers, employers and parents would welcome a ‘one-stop’ shop for information about careers because the range of online material currently available to them is bewildering. The CYH website is such a place and this function could be enhanced.

- Consider making the criteria for inclusion of web-links to other (than CYH) careers materials more explicit.

Respondents recognised the difficulty of releasing teachers/tutors to undertake visits to employers’ premises. Nonetheless there remains a need for teachers to have more knowledge and experience of the labour market.

- Explore the feasibility of short teacher placements to local industry.

Many schools and colleges are making significant progress and it was suggested they should be enabled to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of careers work delivery.

- Identify resources to support schools and colleges to evaluate the effectiveness of careers work delivery.
- Allocate resources to support the development of evaluation tools and instruments (e.g. based on Gatsby Benchmarks).
- Use Opportunity Area funding to support teacher development in inspiration work.

Employers are believed to dislike short-term initiatives, preferring continuity and a strong sense of direction. One respondent felt that employer engagement with inspiration could be a 10-15 year project.

- Consider developing long-term strategic aims for inspiration.
- Consider the development of key performance indicators (or success criteria)

for inspiration work for the short, medium and long-term.

- Clarify the parties that would need to work together to achieve continuity in inspiration activities.

Several respondents suggested a tension between the goals of ‘localism’ and ‘cold spots’ and the priorities of national agencies. This is further exacerbated by the absence of coterminous geographical areas, where LEP areas, local authority boundaries, travel to work patterns, educational trusts, and NCS Prime Contractor regions are all different.

- Initiate local dialogue about what localism and cold spots mean in practice and how these can be best defined.
- Clarify the relationship between inspiration and other initiatives such as the mentoring project.

Respondents welcomed CYH’s commitment to supporting the delivery of good career guidance practice.

- Make explicit how quality frameworks (e.g. Gatsby Benchmarks) can work alongside notions of impartial careers information, advice and guidance.

CYH has been working on two separate initiatives aiming to articulate what good careers guidance looks like in practice; one involves collaboration with local LEPs and an external consultant, and the other involves working with another external consultant to develop an entitlement for young people modelled on London Ambitions (Hughes, 2015). Both initiatives are due to report in the early summer of 2017.

- Continue to work collaboratively with local partners in the development and implementation of a careers offer for all young people across the region.

## Conclusions

The research suggests that Careers Yorkshire and the Humber (CYH) is continuing to make good progress in its inspiration work and fulfilling the expectations that it set itself in its Inspiration Plans. Whilst celebrating its continuing achievements CYH is set on a journey of improvement and is actively seeking to continue to work collaboratively with partners, to make the most of its networks, to continue to provide impartial, labour market information and to grow the infrastructure (e.g. web portal) to meet the needs of young people, and their parents and advisers for reliable career-related information and support activities.

The context for CYH's inspiration work during 2016-2017 has become more complex as more organisations and services become available. This presents challenges but also opportunities which CYH appear to have grasped with enthusiasm.

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## Appendix A

### Inspiration Plans

CYH's aims and plans for inspiration activity in the period April 2016–March 2017 by theme were:

#### **Localism**

*To work closely with each LEP through our CYH Area Director, PAC Manager, Operations Managers and 4 Partnership Coordinators who are linked to the LEPs through: Careers strategy/working groups; Sub groups of Skills Boards; Regular meetings with LEP Skills leads; Co-location. Through this close working we will support LEP development work and priorities.*

*We will strengthen our links with the CEC working with the LEPs in each local area. Our Partnership Coordinators are key to the delivery of our plan and their work is seen as a hugely valuable resource in external evaluation. In line with our commitment to localism and to each individual LEP we have one linked to each LEP. From April 2016 we will increase this resource so that all 4 are full time posts.*

*The quality and accessibility of our LMI is a major contributor to our inspiration agenda and we will build on our first plan. We will continue to ensure access to up-to-date and accurate, local LMI for frontline staff, schools, colleges, stakeholders and parents to facilitate good career decisions.*

*LMI highlighting growth areas for each LEP will be produced - 3 priority growth sectors per LEP area, in consultation with the LEPs. These will be accessible through our portal with newsletters and twitter alerts focussing attention. The presentation will be attractive, up to the minute, easily understood, slick.*

*We will produce wrap round resources with this local, focussed LMI including lesson plans and posters so teachers can readily use them in school and where requested, will hold workshops for teachers/parents.*

*We will seek the views of schools to identify resource and format needs and feedback from users so that we can improve resources and target need effectively.*

#### **Cold spot focus**

*We will focus activity on cold spots working from our own knowledge: In each LEP area we will identify cold spots where there is currently relatively little careers related activity within school/s and limited links to employers.*

*We will focus our help in these areas, however we will work closely with CEC Enterprise Coordinators to complement Enterprise Adviser activity which is itself focussed on cold spots. We will also work closely with LEPs to the same end. We will investigate and where possible remove barriers to inspiration activity - the origin of cold spots.*

*We will work with established network groups in cold spot areas or set up new network groups where demand is determined.*

## **Apprenticeships**

*We will link apprenticeship opportunities to local priorities and sectors and consistent with the SFA agenda promote apprenticeships through our brokerage model within the context of impartiality.*

*We will produce a quarterly edition of LMEye that will include 4 local supplements of micro LMI tailored to meet LEP and identified needs. These will include apprenticeship and STEM career news highlighting opportunities available in the local labour market. This will also be available through our portal.*

*We will put on LMI workshops for teachers and parents including in cold spot areas and awareness of apprenticeship opportunities will be will be a consistent thread through all activity.*

*We will put a particular focus on higher level apprenticeships and will research opportunities which will be included in our newsletters, bulletins and on the portal.*

## **Digital by default**

*We will further develop our inspirational portal [www.inspiringyandh.co.uk](http://www.inspiringyandh.co.uk); feedback on this from our external evaluation and from the website itself, is extremely positive.*

*We will develop a virtual user group to gather feedback on the site and make improvements informed by that on an on-going basis.*

*We will develop the site to reflect our new Inspiration plan including the particular focuses highlighted above.*

*Our 2 websites, *inspiringyandh* and Careers Yorkshire and the Humber will merge making navigation more fluid and all information and resources more accessible.*

*Our LMI is researched and produced by a dedicated LMI Coordinator, drawing on Labour Insight, frontline NCS experience and localised knowledge promptly feeding in opportunities in terms of training, education, micro LMI and jobs. Information is efficiently gathered, interpreted and made available to all frontline intermediaries in the wider IAG stakeholder network, including through our portal.*

*We will increase promotion of the portal through twitter, newsletters, our resources for schools, events and meetings.*

*We will continue to use webinar technology and widen its use where possible.*

## Making sense of the inspiration landscape

*We will help schools to make sense of multiple offers: Partnership Coordinators are aware of the initiatives in their area and what they can offer schools, they have employer contacts in growth areas, can help schools navigate the resources available to them. They will explain these to schools through meetings with key staff, through network meetings, through briefings such as the one produced for work with the CEC Enterprise Advisers and Coordinators.*

*We will work with key partners to help them deliver successful inspiration activity where this is wanted e.g. JCP in schools initiative - offering LMI support. We will work with the CEC/Enterprise Adviser Network through steering groups and individually, to ensure a coherent offer to schools.*

*We will promote quality standards in Careers and support initiatives to this end (e.g. in South Yorkshire we are encouraging the LEP to include support for QA in their devolution asks). We will hold workshops on awards where appropriate.*

*Our aim is to do what is needed to fit with new guidance/legislation and provision in each LEP area and help schools and employers to understand it and their role in it.*

*The Gatsby benchmarks will form a backdrop to our plan and we will cross reference our resources to them.*

*We will continue to promote the CEIAG Toolkit (including information on a range of quality standards and Labour Market Intelligence) accessible via the Inspiration portal. This includes encouraging schools to explore embedding core quality standards through promotion of CEIAG Quality Standards. The CEIAG Toolkit helps to ensure schools based staff are enabled to support young people to develop the career management skills they need to succeed.*

## Regional

*We will work with each LEP to get a Yorkshire and the Humber aspirational entitlement for young people linked to Inspiration and Careers which has consistency across the region. This will contribute to coherence in bidding and stakeholder activity in that it will work towards the aspiration.*

*We will link activity in our plan to regional initiatives (e.g. HS2; Screen Yorkshire; Tour de Yorkshire) which builds on their cachet and increases inspirational potential.*

*We will continue to work with the regional TUC promoting the National Careers Service and linking to the inspirational agenda - to inspire progression in work. A new toolkit will open up opportunities in local areas. Growth sectors and skills shortages will be highlighted - inspiring those in work in the management of their careers. Working with Unionlearn we will incorporate into their 'offer' in the work place through e.g. regional TUC events, ULR communications.*

## Communications strategy

*We will integrate our Inspiration and core National Careers Service work more closely so that each can benefit from the other. The key message is: "The National Careers Service helps people get on in work and life". Underpinning this message National Careers Service supports the culture change and will inspire and empower people to identify and pursue their ambitions and optimise their abilities, as well as enabling employers to find the skills/people they need to grow, thus enabling sustained economic growth and social mobility within Yorkshire & Humber.*

*Our communication strategy is about how we work together to achieve the above. We will communicate the messages through: Reports, Social media (Facebook, Twitter), Website local pages, Newsletters, PR in in-house magazines, attendance at strategic meetings and events.*

*Our 2 websites, inspiringyandh and Careers Yorkshire and the Humber will merge making navigation more fluid and all information and resources more accessible.*

*We will ensure Stakeholders are aware of NCS successes and understand the need to keep themselves up to date.*

*We will develop and produce tailored promotional and engagement materials in a range of formats designed to maximise the engagement with NCS and local LMI and support frontline intermediaries with a careers remit in their role.*

*We will keep in touch and up to date with our key partners through attendance at meetings and events as well as through our communication of messages outlined here.*

(Source: Careers Yorkshire and the Humber Inspiration Plans)

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<sup>1</sup>[https://careersyandh.co.uk/CYH\\_News](https://careersyandh.co.uk/CYH_News)