



Partneriaeth Sgiliau Rhanbarthol
Gogledd Cymru
North Wales
Regional Skills Partnership

ANNUAL REPORT

2024 /25

rspnorth.wales



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Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the 2024/25 Annual Report of the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership (RSP), an opportunity to reflect on another dynamic year of collaboration and progress across the region's skills landscape.

Since launch of the 2023-2025 Skills and Employment Plan, we've continued to build on the progress made, working closely with our partners and stakeholders to deepen the vital connections between employers, education and training providers. This collaborative approach is helping to ensure that North Wales is well positioned to respond to the changing demands of the labour market.

This year, we've maintained a strong focus on supporting our key growth sectors, launching a new employer cluster group in Advanced Manufacturing and Energy, while continuing collaboration with other sectors to help tackle skills gaps and shortages. We have inspired more people to explore careers in these vital industries and have engaged with a broader range of employers than ever before. By listening to their experiences and challenges, we have co-developed practical, evidence-based solutions aligned with the needs of our regional economy.

A significant highlight this year has been the launch of the much-needed North Wales Skills Portal. This regional resource is now an invaluable tool for both employers seeking skilled talent and individuals looking for career opportunities. The successful launch of the Skills Portal marks a major milestone for the RSP, providing a central hub for information, training and development opportunities.

We have also been actively involved in major regional initiatives aimed at driving growth in the region, including the North Wales Growth Deal, Anglesey Freeport and the Flintshire & Wrexham Investment Zone. These initiatives present significant opportunities for advancing the region's economic development, addressing sector specific skills needs and ensuring that North Wales remains competitive and well-positioned for future growth.

None of this would be possible without the commitment and dedication of our RSP Board members, our sub-group chairs and members and the many partners who give their time and insight so generously. I'd like to thank everyone involved for their continued support in shaping a stronger, more responsive skills system.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to empowering employers, equipping individuals, and enhancing the connections across the region. Together, we can unlock potential, drive inclusive economic growth and ensure North Wales continues to thrive as a region full of opportunities.

Thank you for being part of the journey.

David Roberts

Chair of the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership



Who are the North Wales RSP?

Our role and remit

The North Wales Regional Skills Partnership is one of four partnerships across Wales, bringing together employers, skills providers and key local stakeholders to better understand employer skills needs at a local and regional level.

The main role of the RSP is to address skills shortages by influencing post-16 skills provision in North Wales based on labour market intelligence and employer-led insight. The RSP pools intelligence from across the labour market system, leverages existing networks and provides vital strategic advice, oversight and recommendations to decision-makers.

The RSP believe in the transformative power of training and upskilling new and existing staff to drive business provision seamlessly with business needs.

The RSP members represent networks of partners, rather than solely their own organisation or institution. They act as conduits to wider networks of stakeholders and providers to the skills and employment ecosystem of North Wales.

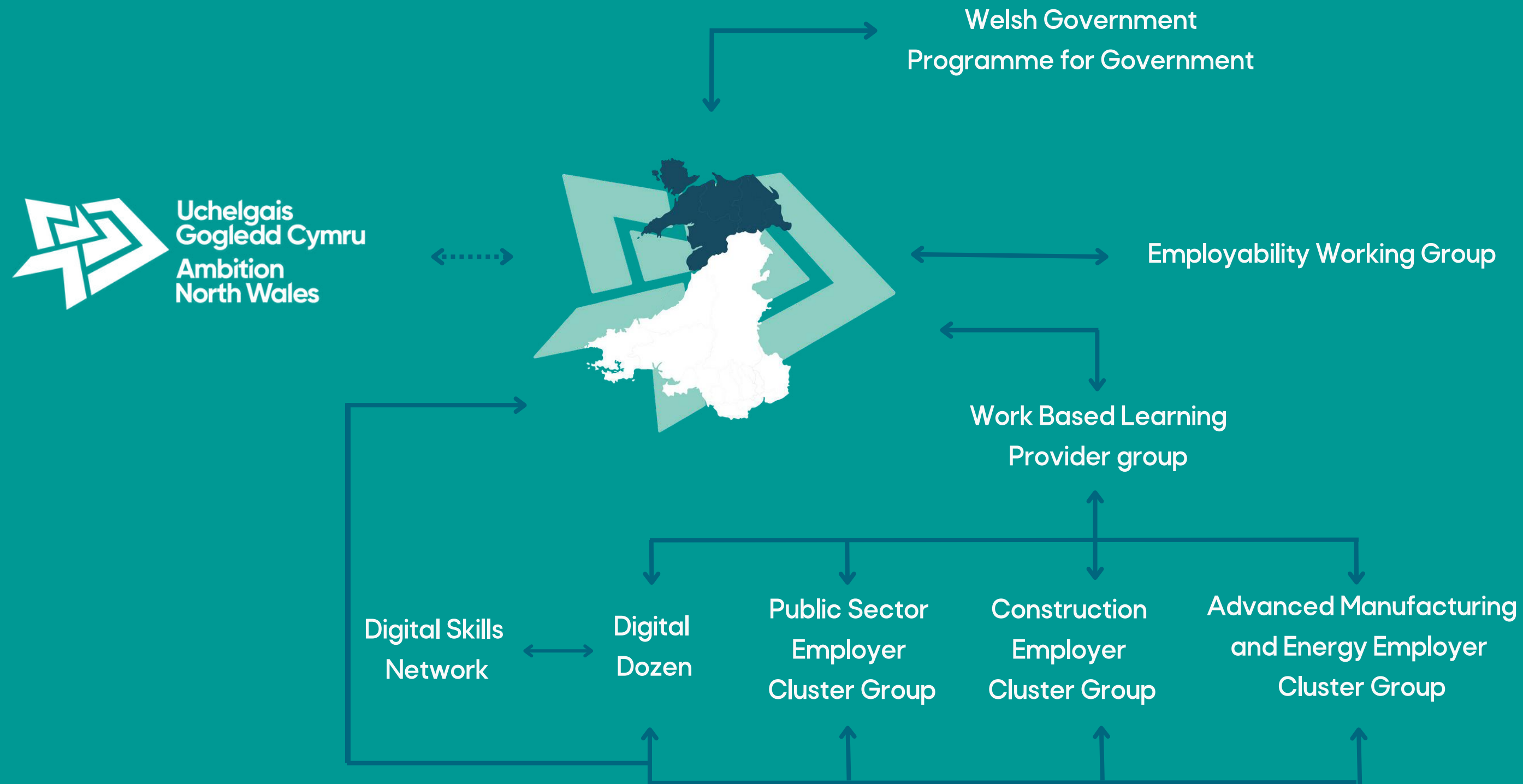
Governance and membership

Feeding into the RSP Board, there are six sub-group / clusters. These include:

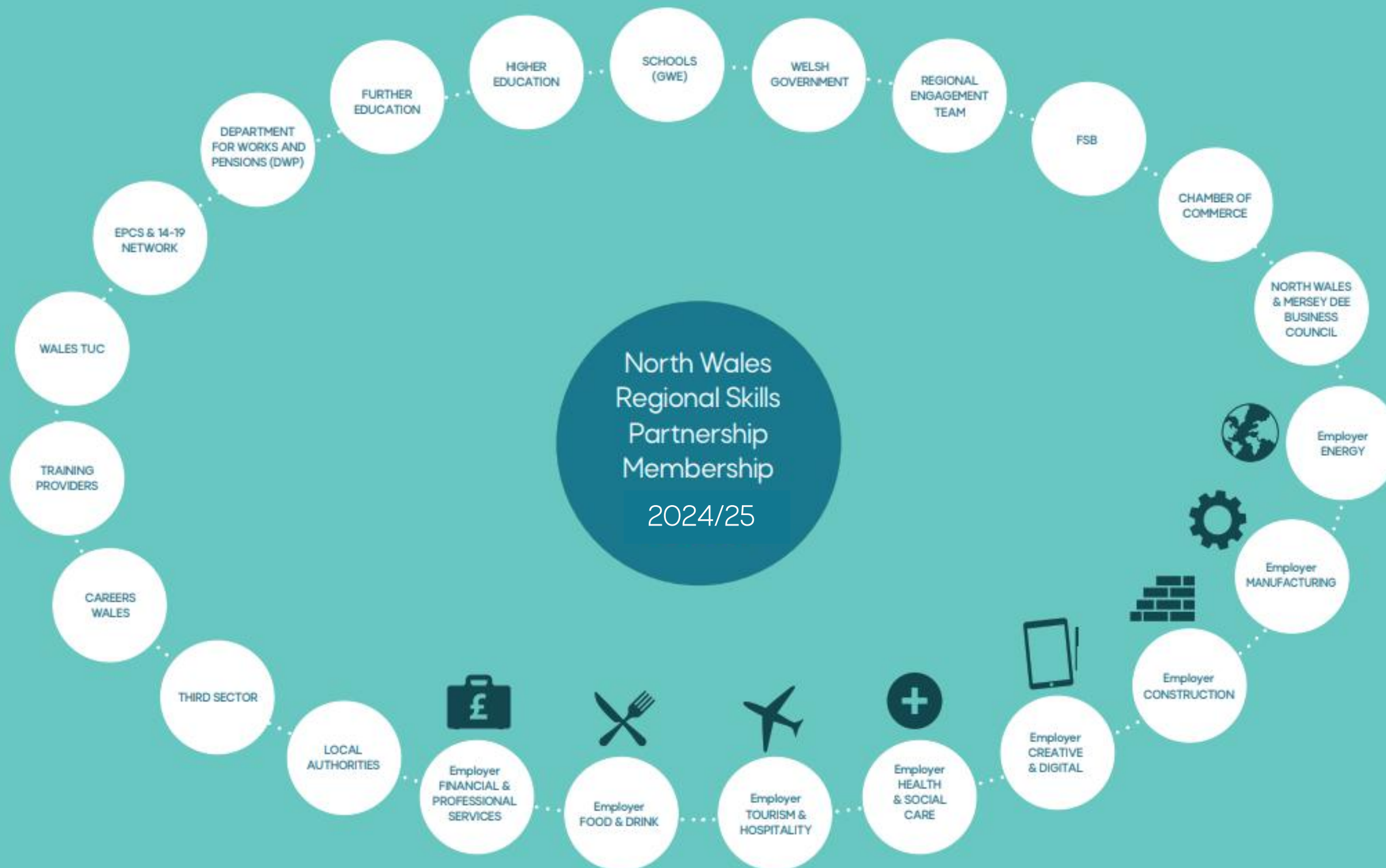
- 01 **Employability Working Group**
- 02 **Work-based Learning Provider Group**
- 03 **Digital Skills Network / Digital Dozen**
- 04 **Construction Employer Cluster Group**
- 05 **Public Sector Employer Cluster Group**
- 06 **Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Employer Cluster Group**

These networks are made up of a local training providers, local employability providers and local employers, from SMEs to large enterprises. The purpose of these network is to bring people together to share their challenges and best practice, and to strengthen collaborations across the region.

North Wales Regional Skills Partnership Structure

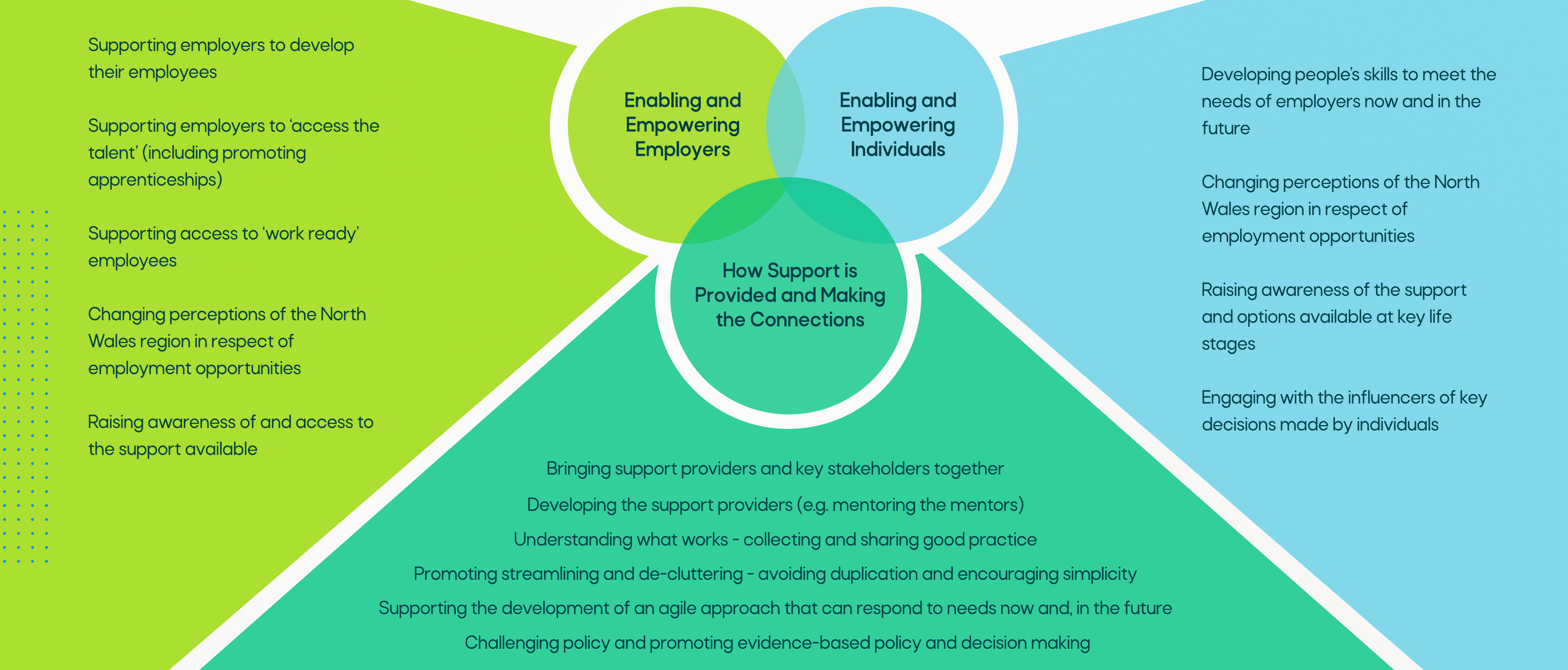


North Wales Regional Skills Partnership Membership



Our North Wales Skills Blueprint

To underpin our Vision, and set within our regional context, we have identified 3 Priorities that are required to support skills and employment landscape over the next 3 years.



Our 2024-25 Highlights



Navigating Workforce and Skills Challenges Event



Teacher-Employer Encounters



UK Global Offshore Wind Conference



Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Cluster Group



Presentation to Flintshire Head Teachers



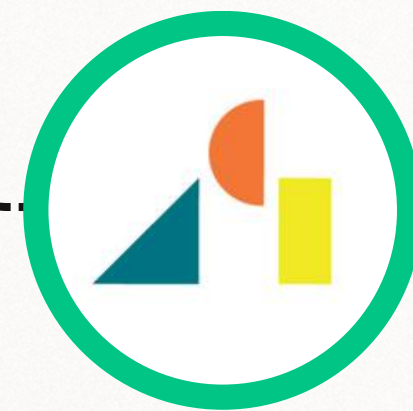
Social Care Pilot



Engagement with young people



Inspire to Build



North Wales Skills Portal



Employability Workshops



Graduate Research Report

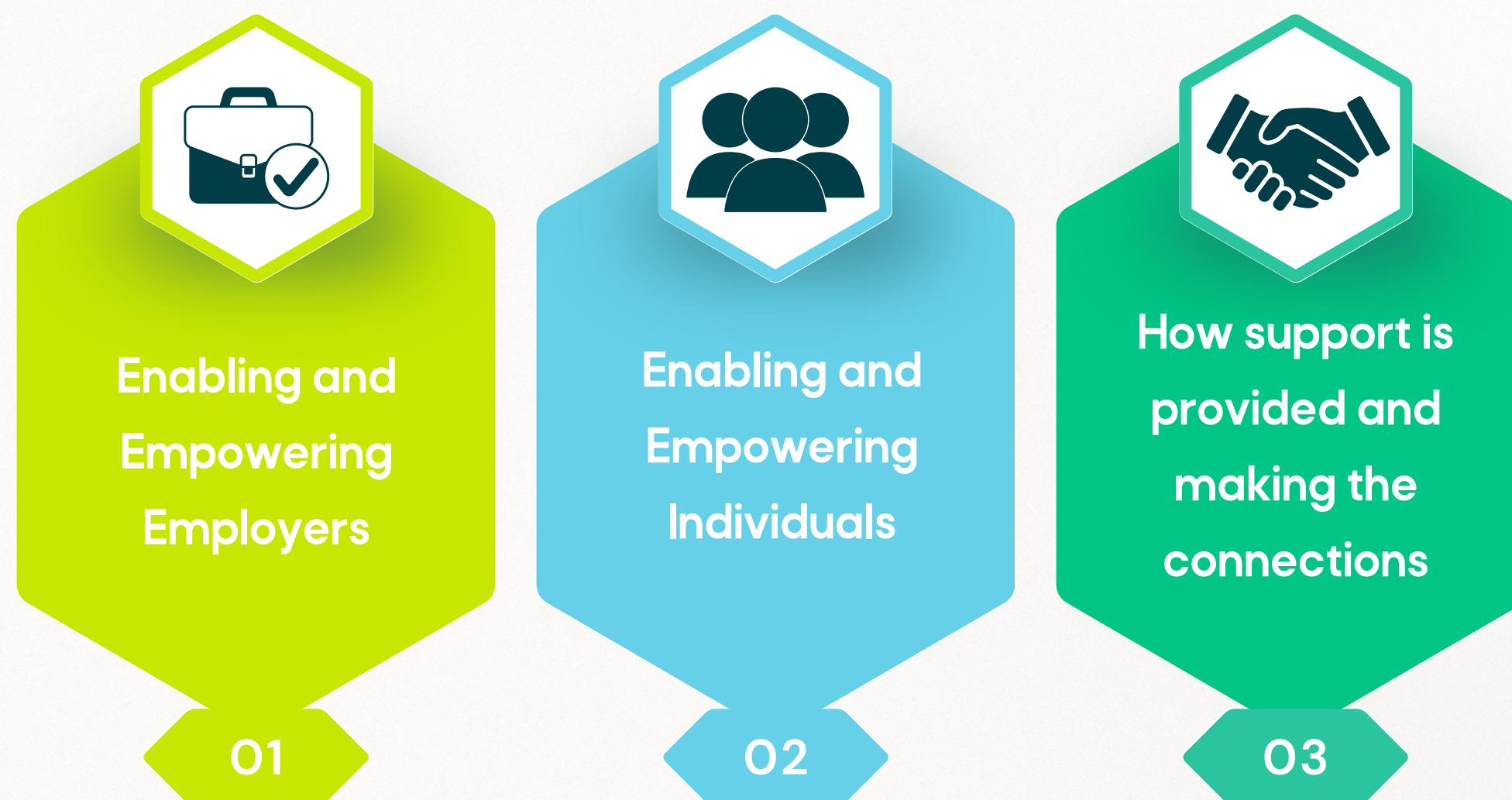


Celebrating 10 years of the RSP

Our Priorities

To underpin the Skills and Employment Plan 2023-2025, the RSP have three over-arching priorities that support the growth within the skills landscape in North Wales. These priorities were drawn together from extensive workshops with the RSP Board and its sub-groups and were further shaped by insights and feedback from a broad spectrum of employers, providers, and key stakeholders.

This year, the RSP have remained committed to implementing the actions detailed in the Skills and Employment Plan, working collaboratively with partners to address the region's skills gaps and meet the evolving demands of the labour market. The RSP have highlighted some of the year's key achievements to showcase the progress made with partners, and how these initiatives are shaping the future of skills development in North Wales.



Priority 1: Enabling and Empowering Employers

UK Global Offshore Wind Conference

As the skills topic champions for the Offshore Energy Alliance, the RSP took part in the Offshore Energy Alliance Panel at the Renewable UK Global Offshore Wind conference in Manchester. This platform was used to promote career opportunities in the renewables sector, particularly offshore wind in North Wales, while showcasing the existing and developing skills pipeline and training provision to support future workforce needs.

The RSP are pleased to be working with the Offshore Energy Alliance and offshore wind developers including RWE, BPEBW, and RenewableUK to identify and address the sector's critical skills requirements. With major projects such as Mona, Morgan, and Awel y Môr on the horizon, this partnership plays a key role in positioning North Wales as a centre of excellence for skilled local supply chains, helping to mitigate skills gaps and maximise the region's economic potential in offshore energy.

Offshore Wind Roundtable at the Port of Mostyn

The RSP presented at the Offshore Wind Roundtable Discussions held at the Port of Mostyn. The event brought together representatives from Welsh Government, local training providers and leading energy employers in North Wales.

Key resources were shared to support the low carbon energy industry, including research into the regional skills landscape, a prospectus showcasing North Wales's education and training offer for developers and supply chain businesses, and a short video summarising the key insights.

The discussion provided a valuable opportunity to highlight the region's readiness to meet future workforce demands and explore how to strengthen its position as a hub for offshore wind development.



Navigate Workforce and Skills Challenges Event

To help employers navigate the evolving landscape of workforce and skills challenges, the RSP hosted a Navigating Workforce and Skills Challenges event at Venue Cymru in April. Bringing together 150 delegates, the event was designed to spark practical discussions and share actionable insights on pressing issues such as talent recruitment, staff development and retention strategies.

With engaging speaker sessions and practical breakout discussions, the event equipped employers with fresh perspectives and actionable solutions. A key highlight from the event was a keynote speech from Craig Weeks of JCB, who emphasized the long-term benefits of investing in staff and developing homegrown talent. A dynamic panel discussion and breakout sessions further explored innovative approaches to attracting and retaining talent, particularly in response to shifting generational expectations and skills gaps.

This event not only fostered collaboration but also reinforced the critical importance of ongoing investment in workforce training and upskilling. As the world of work continues to evolve, supporting staff development is essential to staying competitive, building resilience, and creating workplaces where people can thrive.

Teacher-Employer Encounters

The RSP delivered the first of its kind, 'Teacher-Employer Encounters', part of the Anglesey Career Pathways Pilot, bringing together local employers and over 30 primary and secondary school teachers. The event gave teachers a valuable opportunity to deepen their understanding of the skills young people need to succeed in the workplace and how these link to classroom learning. It also highlighted regional support available from GwE and Careers Wales and promoted key resources such as the Young Person's Toolkit and the North Wales Skills Portal, with employers sharing first-hand insights into the skills they most value.

Adra

**Iwan Trefor Jones,
Chief Executive, Adra**

"The RSP has evolved into a vital and respected strategic partnership in North Wales, providing leadership on skills and employment issues. Due to the work of the RSP, the region has a clear strategic direction to improve skills to drive business growth - underpinned by close collaboration between all the relevant partners, including the private sector."



Apprenticeship Pathways Inquiry

The RSP submitted a detailed written response to the Senedd's Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee as part of its inquiry into Apprenticeship Pathways. The response highlighted key challenges around progression routes, lack of flexibility in apprenticeship frameworks, declining apprenticeship starts in key sectors and persistent access barriers for both learners and employers, particularly SMEs and those in rural areas.

Following this, Pryderi Ap Rhisiart, Chair of the Digital Skills Network give verbal evidence at the Senedd on behalf of the RSP. His contribution reinforced regional insights and provided examples of the need to modernise frameworks and improve accessibility, especially for sectors such as digital, green, construction and health & social care.

Our contribution has ensured that regional employer voices were heard at a national level. It has also strengthened collaboration with Medr and Welsh Government to shape more responsive and inclusive apprenticeship frameworks that align with current and future labour market needs.

Wavehill Labour Market Intelligence Report

Up-to-date labour market intelligence (LMI) is central to understanding how North Wales' economy is evolving. To support this, a study was commissioned to analyse the latest available data alongside future trends and forecasts across the region's nine key sectors. The aim was to identify medium- to long-term labour market needs, including emerging occupations and skills in demand. The research offers valuable insights into growth areas, skills shortages, and sectoral shifts, helping inform curriculum development and guide local education and training provision. These findings will also support careers advice and workforce planning across the region. The full report is available to view [here](#).

New Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Employer Cluster Group

In February, the RSP held the first meeting of the newly established Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Employer Cluster Group. This group brings together employers of all sizes from across the region to discuss skills needs, challenges and opportunities. The first meeting focused on identifying key challenges, skills gaps and shortages, and provision gaps to establish priorities for the next 12 months and agree on actionable steps to support the industries. One of the key messages from employers include challenges with recruitment and retention, particularly recruitment of skilled operatives. Businesses are also facing challenges in recruiting young people into the sector and are keen to find solutions that will explain what occupations there are to inspire young people to consider these sectors as potential careers.

With Advanced Manufacturing designated as the focus for the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone, this group is set to play a key role in shaping skills development, responding to industry needs, and supporting regional economic growth. Debbie Jones of M-SParc (Director of the Wales Nuclear Forum & Cluster Lead for the Offshore Energy Alliance) has been appointed Chair, with Martin Evans from Airbus named as Vice Chair.

AIRBUS

Martin Evans, Head of Industrial Academy at Airbus and Vice Chair of the Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Employer Cluster Group

Our people are key to the success of our advanced manufacturing business. They are what makes the difference! Training underpins this, delivering the necessary skills for today and tomorrow. Ultimately, ensuring Broughton remains at the forefront of Aerospace manufacturing. The North Wales RSP and Welsh Government's support has been crucial, enabling us to develop and deliver world class training.

Priority 2: Enabling and Empowering Individuals

Presentation to Flintshire Heads

Early in 2024, the RSP were invited to present its recent work to Flintshire headteachers. This session provided an opportunity to share labour market information and emerging employer skills needs to highlight the areas of growth that could be expected in Flintshire over the coming years. The Young Person's Toolkit was also showcased, with clear links drawn between these resources and the Careers and Work-Related Experiences (CWRE) components of the new curriculum.

Vicky Barlow, Senior Manager for School Improvement, Flintshire Education and Youth Portfolio shared how beneficial this session was for Flintshire schools; "I was delighted to be able to signpost our schools in Flintshire to the Young Person's Toolkit. This resource can be used by young people, parents, teachers, careers advisors and so many more to help inspire and inform young people". For the RSP, this feedback is valuable as it serves as a reminder for the purpose of the work we strive to deliver.

Information about the Anglesey Career Pathways pilot was shared and the innovative cross-partnership work that has been ongoing in Anglesey. There was a strong appetite from Flintshire headteachers to replicate a similar model in Flintshire and hope to get this underway in 2025.

Innovation Champion - Interactive 360 Careers

Over the past year, the RSP have worked with OneStep North, by becoming an Innovation Champion, and supporting the development of their interactive 360-degree career guidance platform. This role reflects a commitment to Net Zero, highlights North Wales as a leader in innovative careers support and strengthens the region's presence within the digital career exploration landscape.

By sharing expertise and insights, innovation champions ensure the platform authentically mirrors in-person experiences, enhances accessibility and overcomes challenges faced by learners. The RSP contributions foster a collective voice that promotes career development and makes informed decision making more attainable for individuals. This collaboration not only enriches the learning experience but also positions North Wales as a hub for forward-thinking career guidance, empowering individuals to navigate their career paths with confidence and clarity.

Inspire to Build

The six week 'Inspire to Build' programme saw a cohort of 14 Sixth Form students from Anglesey secondary schools explore the different careers in the Construction sector from architecture and quantity surveying and civil engineering. Pupils had the opportunity to learn more about the current labour market, meet local employers and develop practical skills.

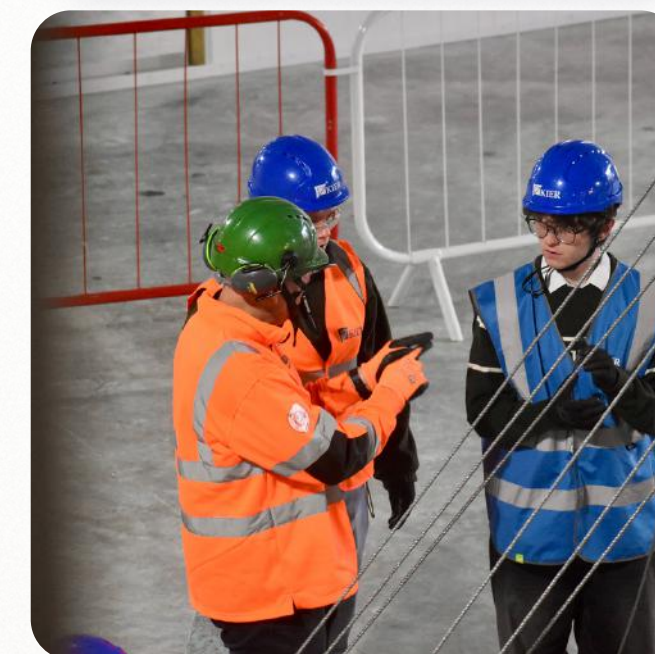
During the programme, these young people spent time at Coleg Menai, touring their facilities and learned about diverse progression routes into construction, such as further education, apprenticeships, degree apprenticeships, and university. A site visit to Kier Construction in Holyhead challenged students to manage a simulated bridge build, developing their teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills.

The programme had strong early impact, not just in raising awareness, but in creating real opportunities. One pupil has already secured work experience placement over the summer of 2025 through an employer they connected with during the programme. This initiative shows the power of early engagement and employer collaboration in helping young people make informed career choices and in addressing local skills gaps within the construction industry. It's a model that the RSP hope to build on and scale across the region. Find out more [here](#).

Social Care Pilot

A Social Care pilot was launched in November, led by the North Wales Workforce Board with development and delivery support from the RSP. The project aimed to engage over 700 Year 9 pupils from Anglesey schools, providing early exposure to the wide variety of roles available within the social care sector. Its core objective was to inspire pupils to consider careers in social care ahead of making their GCSE subject choices.

The pilot was a significant success, generating strong engagement from both pupils and schools. By offering meaningful, early career insights the project helped to challenge outdated perceptions of the sector and showcased the vital, rewarding opportunities that social care can offer. This early intervention approach is seen as a valuable model for workforce development and talent attraction in the sector, with strong potential for replication across the region.



Engagement with young people – Portal

The North Wales Skills Portal project successfully engaged young people through ten interactive sessions delivered across six local authorities, providing valuable insights into the barriers they face and sharing local skills needs. These sessions were tailored to the interests and needs of different groups, with a focus on either all 9 key RSP sectors or a selection of more specific sectors such as creative and digital, health and social care, and/or construction. The inclusion of guest speakers from local employers provided real-world insights and expectations, enhancing the relevance and impact of the workshops.

Participants in the workshops gained a comprehensive understanding of employers' expectations, including the importance of sector-specific and transferable skills. The activities enhanced their motivation and skills for seeking further employment, training, or education. Additionally, the sessions improved individual awareness of behaviours and attitudes appropriate in employment and skills development settings. This includes improved understanding of working with others, diversity, and inclusion - utilising labour market intelligence, local employer input and resources created such as Young Person's Toolkit.

Feedback collected pre- and post-launch informed the development and continuous improvement of the portal, ensuring it remains user-friendly and relevant. The RSP will continue to evolve the Portal throughout 2025/26.



Young Person

"I didn't know where to look for an overview of my options for when I finish my A-Levels. I'm still not sure what I want to do next, but this will be a good way for me to consider all the options available in North Wales."



Priority 3: How Support is Provided and Making the Connections

Graduate Report by Darogan

To better understand the migration of graduates, the RSP commissioned Darogan to explore the trends and assess the needs of local businesses in terms of graduate recruitment. Some key findings suggest that although young people don't necessarily return to North Wales straight after graduating, they do return later in life. However, this leaves challenges for the region when considering how to attract young people into the region, particularly when there are long-standing barriers such as perceptions of limited employment opportunities and inadequate infrastructure in housing and transport. The study also examined employer appetite for interventions such as a regional graduate programme, identifying a clear interest in more structured support to help businesses attract and retain graduate talent. These insights highlight the need for targeted action to make North Wales a more appealing and accessible destination for early career graduates.

Next steps for the RSP include reviewing the recommendations within the report and working with partners to explore the potential for piloting regional initiatives, such as a graduate programme tailored to local employer needs. If you're keen to know more, you can find the report [here](#).

PSB Civic Mission

This year the RSP have worked closely with Wrexham University's Civic Mission team. As they continue their journey to make a positive difference for the public good across North Wales, the RSP have adopted a supporting role, making connections to local employers who have ongoing pilot projects for young people in the region. It's great to be able to support such a fantastic initiative that enables and empowers local communities for the future.

A dark blue diamond-shaped logo with a white letter 'W' inside.

Nina Ruddle, Head of Public Policy Engagement for Wrexham University

Working with the RSP and the team has been incredibly helpful at Wrexham University and our civic mission, at the heart of this is a focus to enabling the implementation of the Well Being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. In particular the team connected us to employers to support a new pilot leadership programme for Children and Young people to be the future changemakers focused on real challenges across society that all sectors are grappling with.

The team have also been hugely supportive of our work leading the implementation of North Wales Children's University and raising expectations and aspirations of the future workforce of the region. We are excited about working more closely with the team as we collaborate and integrate our work to involve citizens and build the rights skills and learning pathways to meet the challenges we face now and in the future.



**Sian William, Adult Learning
Disability Career Pathway
Coordinator, Cyngor Gwynedd**

I had the opportunity to be part of leading a workshop for an online session of the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership. This was extremely helpful. We had the opportunity to share information about our project with several people across North Wales. Following the workshop I had several people reaching out wanting more information or asking to work together. Having the opportunity to present a workshop on our project has enabled me to network and create new and valuable contacts.

I also had the opportunity to join different online sessions. The fact that they were short sessions and online made it easier for me to attend and work around them. One session with DWP was extremely valuable. I had been trying to create a contact in Gwynedd for a few months. I had a quick chat with Connor Hughes at the end of the session and he introduced me to Buddug Hewlett, who has been extremely supportive of the project. The RSP has given me valuable opportunities to network and learn during the past year.

Employability Workshops

In May, the first in a series of monthly workshops was launched for employability practitioners supporting individuals to overcome barriers, secure progress in and sustain employment. Designed to improve understanding of the broader support and provision available across North Wales, each session has taken a collaborative and informal format, with presentations covering areas such as apprenticeship pathways, Welsh Government employability programmes and specialist support for individuals with learning disabilities. Presenters have shared key details on the purpose of the provision, eligibility, and referral processes to better equip practitioners in their roles.

The sessions have attracted strong engagement, with over 50 attendees per workshop representing 14 organisations from across the region. This high level of participation highlights the value of the workshops in expanding knowledge, fostering collaboration, and sharing best practice. Due to positive feedback and continued interest, the series will continue into the following year, with a focus on sector-specific needs and the use of Labour Market Intelligence to further enhance employability delivery across North Wales.

Celebrating 10 years of the North Wales RSP

2024 marked 10 years of the North Wales RSP. To mark the occasion, a joint meeting was held between the RSP Board and its subgroup members at Venue Cymru. The event provided an opportunity to reflect on a decade of collaboration and progress, acknowledging achievements, identifying areas for improvement and looking ahead to future priorities. Attendees engaged in discussions to identify potential workstreams and priority areas for 2025/26, as the partnership approaches the final year of delivering the current Skills and Employment Plan.



The Anglesey Career Pathways Pilot

Conducted collaboratively between the RSP, Ynys Mon Learning Service and Youth Service, all five secondary schools, Careers Wales, GwE and Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, the Anglesey Career Pathways Pilot was put in place to enhance local career readiness, align educational paths with workforce needs, and bolster economic growth in the county.

The purpose for the pilot programme was to support young people to understand all local opportunities available to them, ensuring the post-16 progressions pathways were understood, and highlighting that there is a range of vocational and academic routes available, including apprenticeships. Encouraging engagement between teachers, learners and employers was key to the programme as this open dialogue allows teachers to embed careers and work-related experiences into the curriculum and learning plans, allowing young people to realise the skills and qualities needed to enter the workforce.

The Anglesey Career Pathways pilot has been a great driver for trialling new projects with Anglesey secondary schools and employers throughout 2024. Over the past year, the RSP have seen a number of pilot projects delivered, all of which have been a huge success.

Following success of these projects, the RSP are in discussions with other local authorities to explore opportunities for replicating the Anglesey Career Pathways Pilot. Plans include establishing similar working groups to expand this approach across the region and further strengthen local career pathway initiatives.



North Wales Skills Portal

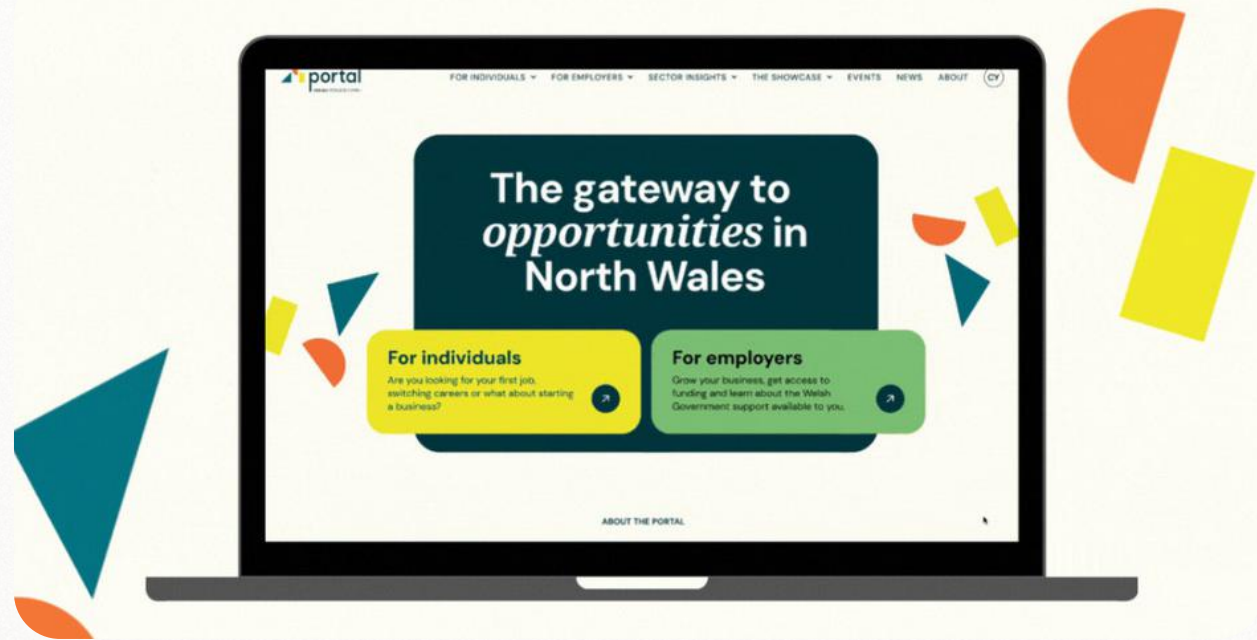
In January 2025, the RSP proudly launched the [North Wales Skills Portal](#), an innovative online platform designed to connect individuals and employers with local skills development, employment opportunities, training, and support providers. On the Portal you can find:

-  **Live job vacancies:**
Explore and apply for job and apprenticeship openings in the region. 
-  **Sector insights:**
Discover career options, pathways and the skills needed for North Wales's growth sectors. 
-  **Local events and resources:**
Find local events, resources, and guidance for both employers and individuals to maximise opportunities. 

-  **Training opportunities:**
Enhance your skills with various training programs and connect with providers. 
-  **Business skills support**
Employers can access resources and opportunities to develop their workforce and expand their networks. 

Since its launch, over 3,000 visitors have explored the portal, discovering valuable information and opportunities. Developed with input from local employers and industry experts, the portal addresses the specific needs of North Wales. These include improving visibility of local training and apprenticeship opportunities, supporting employers and individuals to access training more easily and providing up-to-date accessible information about opportunities in the region. Key stakeholders, including regional colleges, universities, independent training providers, Careers Wales, and other employability providers played a crucial role in its development.

With the first analytical review and user testing completed, the RSP are excited to introduce new features and improvements throughout 2025. These enhancements will better connect people and employers to opportunities, helping to address local skills gaps and maximise regional potential. The RSP encourages training and support providers and employers in North Wales to engage with the Portal. Share your opportunities, collaborate with the RSP to create new and engaging content, and provide feedback to ensure the Portal continues to be a valuable regional asset.



The North Wales Skills Portal was made possible with £75,000 in funding from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

North Wales Skills Portal Development Timeline

October 2023

Awarded UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding to deliver the North Wales Skills Portal.

January 2024

Rees Brown joined as Skills Portal Project Manager to oversee the portal's development, aimed at providing a digital platform showcasing local training, job and support opportunities in North Wales. Better connecting employers, individuals and local training and support providers.

February - March 2024

Conducted additional market research and testing. Engaged with Local Enterprise Partnerships and combined authorities in England with similar platforms to gather insights and lessons learned, helping to refine the project's focus.

April - May 2024

Appointed Tropic Studio, a local M-SParc based developer, to begin portal development. Conducted discovery workshops to define the portal's purpose, expectations, and key features.

June 2024

Brand design finalised; web design, UI, and UX development commenced.

July - August 2024

Appointed Cara Owen via Llwyddo'n Lleol Gyrfaol Initiative as Communications and Engagement Assistant to support social media, content collation, and stakeholder toolkits. Held three workshops with 60 young people from Anglesey, Flintshire, and Wrexham to discuss career paths and gather insights for the portal's development.

September - October 2024

Began further content and animation development, stakeholder engagement, and content gathering based on engagement/feedback. Final website designs approved, moving into the development phase.

November - December 2024

Final stages of website building, with relevant content being uploaded for launch. Portal undergoing testing and quality assurance,

January 2025

Official launch of the North Wales Skills Portal



Driving Regional Growth

Anglesey Freeport

The RSP has assisted the Isle of Anglesey Council and Quod Consulting with LMI to form part of their Outline Business Case for the Anglesey Freeport application. The RSP provides a strong basis for the Freeport's work on skills. It includes the key partners and brings together skills and training providers (through the North Wales Provider Group and Employability Group), employee-facing services (such as the online job brokerage service) and employers, allowing the RSP to understand what businesses need.

The Freeport does not intend to develop or introduce any new overarching regional mechanisms which duplicate tried, tested and accepted ways of intelligence gathering and strategic planning to meet local and regional skills needs. The RSP has played a key role in developing the skills plan for the Freeport which has been included in the final business case to both UK Government and Welsh Government.

Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone

As a joint commitment by both UK and Welsh Governments, the Investment Zone (IZ) aims to enhance and grow a globally significant advanced manufacturing cluster. Ambition North Wales will work in partnership with Flintshire and Wrexham councils to deliver the IZ which will see an investment of up to £160m over 10 years.

It will unleash further potential for Flintshire and Wrexham, which are already home to high-value manufacturing operations and strategic industrial sites, by offering a unique blend of support, infrastructure and targeted incentives designed to attract and sustain businesses. Benefits will be far reaching, extending across North Wales and beyond.

To see the full potential of the IZ, it's critical that the skills needed in the advanced manufacturing sector are taken into consideration early. To support with this need, the RSP have commissioned Amion to produce a Skills Strategy. The IZ initiative presents an opportunity to develop a targeted approach to skills development, ensuring alignment with sectoral growth in advanced manufacturing, employer needs, and emerging economic trends.

Amion's team have been engaging with employers, training providers and stakeholders via workshops and interviews. This engagement began in March and will continue over the coming months.

W

Laura Gough, Head of Enterprise and Development, Wrexham University

I have worked closely with the Regional Skills Partnership for a number of years and our ongoing collaboration, especially through the Investment Zone initiatives, has been invaluable. These partnerships have deepened my own and the wider University's understanding of regional priorities, supported innovation, and opened up new opportunities for skills development, knowledge exchange and practical positive impact across North Wales. It is a powerful example of how collaborative working can deliver meaningful benefits for the University, regional partners, and the wider business and community ecosystem.

North Wales Growth Deal

As part of the Ambition North Wales Portfolio Management Office, the RSP play a key role in supporting Growth Deal projects to identify and respond to skills needs. Over the past 12 months, work has continued to refine the approach to gathering information on skills gaps and workforce challenges, ensuring that emerging opportunities are captured and addressed effectively. A recent example includes support provided to Zip World's Responsible Adventure project, where input was given to help shape a tailored Skills Plan aligned to the project's workforce requirements. The RSP will continue to support projects as they progress throughout the duration of the Growth Deal term.

In addition to supporting Growth Deal projects, collaboration has also taken place with project sponsors on a range of related initiatives. An example includes working alongside Grwp Llandrillo Menai as they developed their SPF funded Tourism Talent Pathway which was inspired and heavily influenced by the RSP's Young Person's Toolkit, highlighting the value and impact of strong partnership working.



The Regional Skills Partnership is an integral part of the Ambition North Wales team. They are passionate about supporting employers and key sectors to address immediate skills needs, but the unquestionable value is in their ability to bring stakeholders together to plan for the evolving skills demands for the future.”

– Alwen Williams, Ambition North Wales, Portfolio Director



Image shows building that is part of the Cydnerth Project

Campaigns, Marketing and Communications

Over the last 12 months, the RSP has supported several social media campaigns that were hosted by our partners and stakeholders, including the WeCare Wales Social Work Campaign and the Academi Gofal social media campaign, both campaigns were designed to encourage young people and individuals to uptake careers and training opportunities in Health and Social Care. In addition to supporting external campaigns, the RSP also hosted a number of their own social media campaigns and events, including:

Apprenticeship Week

From the 10th-17th of February, the RSP supported the Wales Apprenticeship Week campaign, sharing the benefits and opportunities within apprenticeships across the RSP and the North Wales Skills Portal social media pages. During the week, key content included an overview of what an apprenticeship is, myth-busting perceptions to challenge common misconceptions, and success stories highlighting individuals who have completed apprenticeships.

The campaign also highlighted the benefits of apprenticeships to businesses and employers showcasing an effective way to develop talent and support business growth. Apprenticeship Week serves as a reminder of the different pathways available to individuals, promoting less traditional routes into the workforce or opportunities to upskill - a pathway that is increasing in popularity.

Rhianwen Edwards, Director of Commercial and WBL at Busnes@ Llandrillo Menai and Chair of the RSP WBL Provider Group said, “in a rapidly evolving economy, nurturing talent through work-based learning is paramount... Together, we're shaping a skilled workforce equipped to meet the demands of today's and tomorrow's industries.”, which emphasises the importance of showcasing apprenticeship pathways in as many ways as possible.



National Careers Week / International Women's Day / Women in Construction

In honour of National Careers Week, International Women's Day and Women in Construction all taking place within a few days of each other, the RSP highlighted North Wales' priority sectors, showcasing in-demand job roles, workforce profile statistics, and salaries across social media channels. As part of this campaign, the RSP collaborated with local architect, Mari Evans from Saer Architects in Conwy to write an [article](#) aimed at breaking down barriers and encourage more women to consider careers in the construction sector.

This initiative gained significant traction, with BBC Cymru picking up the story and interviewing Mari to discuss her experiences in the Construction sector in North Wales.

Results Day Campaign

To celebrate GCSE and A-level results weeks, the RSP hosted a 'Results Week Social Media Campaign' across Facebook and X. The different support and pathways available to young people looking to continue their studies or enter the workforce in North Wales was showcased, drawing on the Young Person's Toolkit resources. Two days was dedicated to focus on digital careers and two days to focus on construction careers, promoting the unique 'Inspire to Build' project. The campaign aimed to inspire and encourage young people to remain in the region by highlighting the high-quality training opportunities available locally, reaching over 13,000 individual users across both platforms.



SparcX

In collaboration with M-SParc, CITB, Adra, Design and Architecture Ltd, Cyd Innovation and Anglesey Associates, the RSP successfully held the SparcX career event in February, focusing on the Built Environment Sector. The event provided an engaging platform for connecting attendees with live job and work experience opportunities. Participants were inspired by industry experts, gained valuable insights into local career prospects, and had the opportunity to network with peers and potential employers.

“Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with one participant stating, “The event was incredibly informative and may have opened the door to gaining valuable experience.” An employer also shared, “A fantastic event - extremely worthwhile. We made valuable connections and hope to offer a promising opportunity to the right candidate.”



Digidol 24 Conference

In October, the RSP exhibited and presented at the Digidol 24 conference held at M-SParc. The event provided an opportunity to showcase the work of the Digital Dozen and share findings from the recently commissioned Digital Skills research. The presentation also outlined how the recommendations from the report are being taken forward. To complement the session, Sarah Ellwood and Candice Chartrand from Supertemps were invited to present on current labour market intelligence and job trends. The conference offered a valuable platform for learning, networking, and building connections across the digital and skills sectors.



Assessment over the last 12 months

Employability Working Group

One of the highlights of the year was the delivery of monthly themed workshops for employability practitioners. These sessions supported the upskilling of frontline staff, encouraged the sharing of best practice, and improved awareness of local provision and referral pathways, helping to strengthen the overall quality and consistency of employability support across North Wales.

Employers were invited to attend meetings to share insights on their current and future skills needs, providing members with a clearer understanding of labour market demand across sectors. These sessions created space for dialogue between employers and employability partners, helping to identify opportunities for collaboration to support individuals into work. Alongside this, employability projects from across North Wales presented their delivery models and referral routes. This increased visibility of provision, fostered stronger connections between projects and encouraged a more joined-up approach to service delivery, ultimately helping to reduce duplication and ensure more coordinated support for individuals.

Members regularly presented the achievements and outcomes of their UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) projects, showcasing progress, best practice, and emerging impacts. At the same time, they received regular updates from the Gwynedd Lead Authority team on the wider regional picture and delivery landscape. This ensured alignment and a shared understanding across all funded projects, supported joined-up working, and enabled members to identify synergies, address gaps, and better coordinate activity to maximise the impact of SPF investment across North Wales.

Members were kept updated on the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) Connect to Work programme. The group had the opportunity to ask questions, share insights, and begin considering how the programme might align with or complement existing local employability provision, helping improve understanding and preparedness for its rollout. These discussions also supported early thinking around referral pathways, collaboration opportunities, and potential impacts on current delivery models, ensuring members could start planning for integration.

Niall Waller

Chair of the Employability Working Group



Work Based Learning Provider Group

In response to research showing low employer awareness of digital skills provision, the group supported the development of a Digital Skills Pathway Toolkit, with tailored versions for employers and individuals. The toolkit, which launches in June 2025, aims to simplify access to relevant training and support informed digital skills upskilling across the region.

Providers also shared their current provision in net zero skills, digital skills and leadership and management, offering a clear regional picture of what is available. This collective mapping supports employers in identifying relevant training options to address workforce development needs in key priority areas.

Following a Welsh Government presentation on low usage of the Apprenticeship Vacancy Service (AVS) in North Wales, the group committed to promoting greater awareness of the platform across the region. They agreed to lead by example in its use, explore ways to improve data collection on upskilling versus new roles, and provided feedback to inform future system enhancements. These actions aim to ensure the platform better reflects the true scale of apprenticeship opportunities available in the region.

As active members of the group, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol have worked alongside providers to strengthen bilingual provision in apprenticeships. Together, they continue to promote Welsh-medium and bilingual delivery as a shared regional and national priority.

The group played a key role in shaping the North Wales Skills Portal, with the Chair representing providers on the project board. Providers each have a dedicated presence on the portal to promote their apprenticeship offer, improving access to information for individuals and employers and supporting better visibility of the regional skills landscape.

To support youth engagement, the group helped expand the Young Person's Toolkit by connecting the RSP team with employers of apprentices. This enabled the creation of new, short video case studies showcasing real apprenticeship journeys, designed to raise awareness and inspire more young people to explore apprenticeships as a career option.

Rhianwen Edwards

Chair of the Work Based Learning Provider Group



Public Sector Employer Cluster Group

The Public Sector Employer Cluster Group has continued to provide a collaborative platform for public sector organisations across North Wales to share challenges, identify common skills gaps and work towards practical solutions.

Throughout the year, the group has focused on key workforce challenges such as recruitment difficulties, an ageing workforce and succession planning. Members have also emphasised the growing need for leadership and management development at all levels to ensure a resilient and future ready public sector. Strengthening these capabilities is seen as critical to supporting organisational transformation, staff retention and the delivery of high quality services.

The group has actively contributed to shaping regional priorities by highlighting critical skills needs in areas such as social care, digital services, and net zero. It has also played a valuable role in informing training providers about emerging workforce trends and the demand for more flexible, responsive learning opportunities to meet public sector needs.

Looking ahead, the Public Sector Employer Cluster Group will continue to strengthen collaboration and share best practice across organisations. Plans are in place to explore joint initiatives that support recruitment and upskilling while continuing to promote the public sector as an attractive and inclusive career destination.



Heather Johnson

Chair of the Public Sector Employer Cluster Group

Construction Employer Cluster Group

Over the last year, the Construction Employer Cluster Group has continued to play a key role in identifying regional skills needs, influencing provision and strengthening collaboration across the sector. Made up of employers and industry representatives the group has worked collectively to address common challenges and promote construction as a viable, rewarding career path.

A standout achievement this year has been the successful pilot of the Inspire to Build programme, an initiative developed in partnership with local employers and stakeholders to engage young people and raise awareness of the diverse career opportunities within the construction industry. The programme included interactive sessions and a site visit aimed at changing perceptions and sparking early interest in the sector with a focus on the non-trade occupations. The pilot received highly positive feedback from both students and employers, highlighting its strong potential to support future workforce needs by strengthening the pipeline of young talent entering the construction sector.

Building on the success of the pilot, the RSP are working with local authorities across the region to share the Inspire to Build model, with the aim of encouraging wider rollout or adaptation of similar initiatives in other areas. By doing so, the group hopes to create consistent, region wide engagement that not only promotes construction careers but also helps address recruitment challenges and local skills gaps.

In addition to the pilot, the Cluster Group has contributed to discussions around training provision, apprenticeships, and upskilling, offering valuable employer insight to inform future planning.

Mandy Evans

Chair of the Construction Employer Cluster Group



Digital Dozen & Digital Skills Network

With the development of the North Wales Skills Portal this year, the Digital Dozen had the opportunity to contribute and shape the progress of the Portal, sharing their thoughts on what would be beneficial content to them as employers.

Work has also been progressing well with Ambition North Wales's Digital Programme, with a number of projects fast approaching delivery. Stuart Whitfield, Digital Programme Manager, utilised the Digital Dozen network to consult directly with employers to inform the development of grant schemes and other workstreams.

In October, the Digital Dozen exhibited and presented at the Digidol 24 conference at M-SParc. We shared findings from the recent [Digital Skills research](#). Sarah Ellwood and Candice Chartrand, from Supertemps and members of the Digital Dozen, who also joined us to present current LMI and job trends.

The most notable priority this year has been to respond to the recommendations from the Digital Skills research report, conducted to better understand the digital skills landscape in North Wales. The research engaged with organisations of all sizes, in all sectors, across the region to ensure the insights we gained truly reflected the needs of employers. The recommendations the Digital Dozen chose to prioritise include:

1. Produce clear promotion of apprenticeships to employers on the digital apprenticeship and degree apprenticeship frameworks
2. Provide employers with guidance on the implementation and operation of digital apprenticeships and degree apprenticeships including how they can be used to provide funded training for both new recruits and current employees.
4. Develop signposting to basic and advanced digital skills courses and qualifications in North Wales, also identifying open-source online learning resources endorsed by employers.
5. Implement initiatives to champion widening participation aiming to raise the number and diversity of learners progressing into digital courses and careers.

The last 12 months have been spent developing videos that show individuals who are pursuing successful careers in North Wales, highlighting different pathways and job roles that are available to individuals in the region. Some of the job roles we've highlighted include software engineering, cyber security and computer science. If you'd like to see more about the videos, you can take a look [here](#).

While these videos will address a number of the recommendations, this will be a continuous piece of work for the Digital Dozen to ensure the promotion of apprenticeships and alternative education pathways continue to be promoted.

Pryderi ap Rhisiart

Chair of the Digital Dozen and the Digital Skills Network



Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Cluster Group

In February, the Advanced Manufacturing & Energy Employer Cluster Group was launched as a key milestone in delivering Priority 1 of the 2023–2025 Skills and Employment Plan: Enabling and Empowering Employers. The group brings together a diverse range of employers, from SMEs to large organisations, representing the breadth of sub-sectors across advanced manufacturing and energy in region.

The Cluster Group was established to deepen our understanding of the specific workforce challenges within these sectors and provide a platform for employers to directly shape regional skills priorities. With engineering as a core focus, the group also looks beyond traditional boundaries to address wider skills needs across industry, including digital innovation, automation, and the transition to net zero.

Its core functions include advising on regional training provision, identifying current and future skills gaps, supporting labour market intelligence gathering, and influencing future skills development initiatives.

With 18 core members representing employers of all sizes, including SMEs, and locations across the region, the Cluster Group is already fostering collaboration and shared ownership of regional challenges.

By bringing employers together in this way, the Cluster Group is not only helping us deliver against our action plan but is also creating space for innovation, practical problem solving, and strategic planning, ensuring the region is equipped with the skills, insights, and collaboration needed to respond to future workforce demands.



Debbie Jones

Chair of the Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Cluster Group

How have we helped employers and partners?

Through our work as the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership, we work tirelessly to support employers, build connections and grow our networks to ensure North Wales can maximise its potential within skills and employability. To showcase our hard work and commitment to the development of skills in the region, we reached out to our networks to hear their testimonials about how we've supported them over the last 12 months. Take a look at what has been said about the value of our role:



Phil Jones, Head Of Operations at BGB Group

I was signposted to the lovely Team at North Wales Regional Skills Partnership during a recent Mersey Maritime event. I'd been asking for advice about how to amplify our recruitment opportunities across North Wales so we can mobilise the next generation of Offshore Wind specialists.

The level of advice and support I received in our introductory meeting was excellent and covered a wide range of subjects including (but not limited to); Tackling Skills Gaps, Access to Training and Development, Collaboration and Communication, Impact on our Business and Regional Understanding.

We've got regular catch-ups booked in and in the meantime I've been visiting and networking with with the long list of recommendations I was given. We're very lucky to have this expert resource on our doorstep and I look forward to working together in the future.



Jenny Williams, Chair of the North Wales Social Care and Health Workforce Board – part of the Regional Partnership Board

Being part of the Regional Skills Partnership Board and some of its subgroups has given us an opportunity to begin to showcase and demonstrate what great career opportunities and added value to the economy that there is within the health and social care sector. Having this role at the Regional Skills Partnership Board has further enhanced networking opportunities with other organisations and to highlight the jobs supporting our most vulnerable communities across North Wales, we look forward to doing more with the RSP in the coming 12 months.

The Regional Skills Partnership Board supported a successful series of events in Ynys Môn, where year 9 pupils at each of the 5 high schools attended a showcase event dedicated to the health and social care sector. Pupils got to experience and hear first-hand what career opportunities are available within the sector to enable them to make decisions when embarking on their GCSE options.



Haf Everiss, Further Education and Apprenticeship Officer, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

Being part of the Work-Based Learning Providers Group by the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership has enabled us to work closely with local providers, to inspire them to create and promote training and study opportunities in the Welsh language. Our aim at the College is to give everyone the confidence to use their Welsh when training, studying and working, and the opportunity to have constructive conversations with providers in terms of developing bilingual provision, the availability of qualifications and resources and opportunities to upskill staff has been invaluable. The information we receive in these meetings from the RSP team and other partners is extremely valuable, especially when planning ahead in terms of skills gaps in the Welsh language and meeting employers' needs in the future.

Thank you to the RSP for their enthusiastic support in terms of the Welsh language, ensuring that there is an opportunity to discuss issues at every meeting. Thank you also for helping us to develop valuable partnerships.



Kim Killow, Lead Planning and Development Officer, North Wales Together

On our journey to create the North Wales Supported Employment Strategy and set up the North Wales Supported Employment Service for people with learning disabilities, we have felt supported every step of the way by the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership Team. They have been active members of the steering groups for the strategy and the new service and have supported us to link in with the North Wales Skills Portal and the wider employment and skills landscape in North Wales. As a health and social care partnership, this support has been invaluable.

Most importantly, the team has enabled us to put people with learning disabilities and the supported employment model on the regional agenda. Cross-partnership working, exemplified by this effort, will be even more crucial in the coming years as governments aim to better engage the hidden unemployed, many of whom may be supported by health and social care services.



Steven Cope, Operations Manager at VINCI Facilities

The North Wales Regional Skills Partnership has broadened our understanding of different sources that are open to us as employers, which we could then turn to as a company in the Facilities field to establish a link and partnership, which then went on to improve our operation in the market and also in Wales. We will certainly turn to the Regional Skills Partnership in the future as our contracts and work mature.

Looking Ahead 2025 - 2026

As the new financial year begins and the final year of the 2023-2025 Skills and Employment Plan approaches, the North Wales Regional Skills Partnership remains focused on aligning skills provision with employer needs, supporting inclusive economic growth, and preparing the regional workforce for future opportunities.

This year has brought both change and opportunity, set against a dynamic political landscape. A notable development was the establishment of Medr, marking a positive step for post-16 tertiary education and research in Wales. A 'principles of working in partnership' agreement between Medr and the Regional Skills Partnerships across Wales has been established, setting out shared deliverables and collaborative actions.

Looking ahead to 2025-2026, the RSP will continue to strengthen collaboration with Medr, Welsh Government, education providers, and employers to ensure the region's skills system remains responsive to emerging needs and strategic investment priorities.



1. Jobs, Green Growth & Net Zero Skills

The RSP will play a key role in supporting Welsh Government's Jobs and Green Growth and Net Zero ambitions. By working closely with employers, the RSP will gather real-time, localised intelligence to identify emerging skills gaps and workforce needs in key sectors.

As part of the North Wales Net Zero Skills Delivery Plan, priorities for 2025-26 include:

- Mapping emerging green jobs and associated skills, particularly in renewable energy
- Work with Medr, Further Education & Higher Education Institutions to develop responsive qualifications, training and apprenticeships
- Supporting employers to upskill existing staff in line with green growth opportunities



2. Employer-led intelligence

Engagement with employers will remain central to capturing up-to-date, place-based labour market intelligence. This will support:

- The development of sector-specific action plans
- Informed curriculum development and course adaptation in Further and Higher Education
- Evidence-based decision-making for Medr and Welsh Government in post-16 planning and funding



3. Digital Skills and Emerging Technologies

To help North Wales adapt to the changing digital landscape, the RSP will:

- Continue to support the development of digital skills policy and promote digital literacy and readiness for AI, automation and other emerging tech by:
- Showcase digital skills pathway routes to individuals and employers
- Promote Welsh Government funding for employers to upskill their workforce



5. Strengthen the Skills Pipeline

To ensure young people are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed for the future world of work, the RSP will:

- Work with schools and pre-16 providers to support curriculum design and progression pathways
- Collaborate with Careers Wales to raise awareness of key sector opportunities
- Promote and develop the North Wales Skills Portal as a core resource for young people, educators, employers and parents - highlighting regional career pathways, local training opportunities, and labour market trends



4. Employability and Inclusive Skills

The RSP will continue to support inclusive approaches to workforce development by:

- Working with regional employability providers to prioritise access to employment for under-represented groups, including disabled individuals and prison leavers
- Promoting pathways that support sustainable employment and social mobility



6. Regional Collaboration

North Wales is entering a period of significant opportunity, with major developments such as the Anglesey Freeport, Flintshire & Wrexham Investment Zone, and Growth Deal projects set to drive economic growth and job creation. Skills development is a critical enabler for these investments, ensuring that local employers can meet workforce demands and individuals are equipped to grow, upskill, or reskill in response to emerging opportunities.

The RSP will:

- Align skills planning with economic development and infrastructure project by delivering a Skill Strategy for investments
- Strengthen links with cross-border initiatives including HyNet and Green Growth Regional Skills Pilot

As North Wales responds to emerging economic opportunities and evolving workforce demands, the North Wales RSP will continue to play a vital role in aligning education and training with the region's future labour market needs.

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