

BUSINESS  
IN THE  
COMMUNITY

ANNUAL REPORT

# THE KING'S SEEING IS BELIEVING PROGRAMME

2024 – 2025

Kindly supported by

Linklaters

salesforce



# Contents

MESSAGE FROM THE KING	2
FOREWORD	4
THE KING’S SEEING IS BELIEVING COUNCIL	5
A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR BUSINESS LEADERS	6
ENABLING CHANGE: The Synergy Between The King’s Seeing is Believing and Pride of Place	7
IDENTIFYING ISSUES FOR SOLUTION-FOCUSED COLLABORATION	8
GLASGOW: Learning from lived experience and industrial decline	9
NEWPORT: Connecting disadvantaged communities with job opportunities	12
COVENTRY: Tackling poverty and creating opportunities	16
TEES VALLEY: Enabling intergenerational action on poverty	19
HOUNSLOW: Addressing deprivation	23
NORWICH: Social mobility	26
LONDON: Tackling food insecurity and food waste	29
BRADFORD: Boosting education and employment opportunities	32
TOWER HAMLETS, BRENT AND MANCHESTER: Unlocking apprenticeships for young people	36
WISBECH: Making a lasting difference	40
THANK YOU	43

# Message from The King



HM King Charles III  
December 2023

“  
*I am enormously proud of all that Business in the Community has achieved over the last forty years and welcome its renewed focus on scaling up the impact you can have in local communities, which has long been a concern of mine.*  
  
*I am delighted that the “Seeing is Believing” programme remains at the heart of the plans.*  
  
*Business in the Community’s strength is in the network it convenes and in the pioneering and passionate individuals in business, who help to drive, inspire and engage others to do more.*  
”

*This report contains a selection of actions taken as a result of the visits. Some visits are recent (within the past six months), and traction is growing as work in these areas develops. Short, medium and long-term impacts and actions are planned as a result of these visits and will be demonstrated in a future report. Please also note that the delegate job titles used throughout this report were correct at the time of the visits; however, some individuals may have subsequently moved roles.*









Message from The King	■
<b>Foreword</b>	■
The King’s Seeing is Believing Council	■
A unique opportunity for business leaders	■
Enabling Change	■
Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration	■
Glasgow	■
Newport	■
Coventry	■
Tees Valley	■
Hounslow	■
Norwich	■
London	■
Bradford	■
Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester	■
Wisbech	■
Thank you	■

# Foreword



**John Studzinski CBE**  
Managing Director and Vice Chairman, PIMCO and Chair, The King’s Seeing is Believing Council

As The King’s Seeing is Believing Council, we are honoured to reflect on a year of business engagement and action, building on the simple yet profound idea of His Majesty, then Prince of Wales, that business leaders must see the challenges facing communities first-hand in order to truly understand them and, more importantly, to act on them.

Today, we are proud to see that this legacy lives on with even greater urgency and relevance.

Over the last year, more than 200 senior leaders took part in 12 visits across the UK, with more than 80% taking direct action following their experiences. Collectively, they met with more than 300 community leaders, people with lived experience of the issues, and other local stakeholders.

From Newport to Brent, Glasgow to Tees Valley, and Coventry to Wisbech, leaders have responded to the barriers they witnessed—whether in employment, food insecurity, community investment, or youth opportunity—with tangible interventions and long-term commitments.

The impact of these visits goes far beyond the hundreds of thousands of direct funding and donations to frontline community organisations. They have built relationships that have increased volunteering, boosted pro bono support, and delivered sustained long-term partnerships for transformational change.

The stories in this report are examples of the programme’s enduring strength: the ability to forge meaningful connections between business and community and to catalyse action at both the individual and organisational level.

As the programme enters an exciting new chapter under its royal title—*The King’s Seeing is Believing*—we are proud to help steer its growth. With the support of strategic partners, like Linklaters LLP and Salesforce, we are expanding our ambition to reach even more communities and to engage thousands of business leaders.

When businesses and communities come together to solve problems in this way, the ripple effects of these actions reach far beyond a single event. People’s lives are turned around, local initiatives are strengthened, and the role of business is refocused towards a fairer and greener society. We are committed to telling these stories and building on this impact for long-term, positive change.

Our sincere thanks go to the community organisations that welcomed us, business leaders who led and joined the visits, businesses that took bold steps, and to His Majesty The King for his enduring commitment to responsible business.

We look ahead with conviction and shared purpose—knowing that together, we can catalyse change without which we cannot drive the economic prosperity we need for our communities, our businesses, and the UK to thrive.





# The King's Seeing is Believing Council

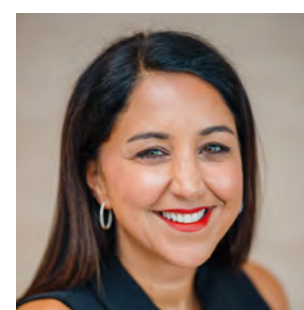
The King's Seeing is Believing Council exists to ensure that the values and the prestige of the programme are maintained and sustained. The Council comprises influential and respected business leaders who have attended and led more than three visits and have been personal advocates for the programme's power to drive action.



**John Studzinski CBE**  
Managing Director and  
Vice Chairman, PIMCO and  
Chair, The King's Seeing is  
Believing Council



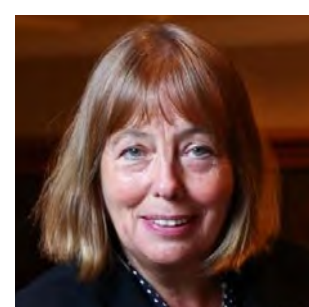
**Lord Charles Allen CBE**  
Chairman, Global Media &  
Entertainment Limited



**Zahra Bahrololoumi CBE**  
EVP and Chief Executive  
Officer, Salesforce UK &  
Ireland



**Sir William Castell LVO  
FMEDSci**



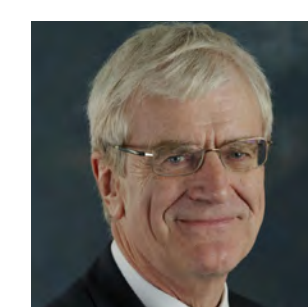
**Dame Julia Cleverdon  
DCVO, CBE**  
Vice President, Business in  
the Community



**Christine Hodgson CBE**  
Chair, Severn Trent plc



**Dame Vivian Hunt**  
Chief Innovation Officer,  
UnitedHealth Group



**Sir Richard Lambert**  
Chair, Observer  
Editorial Board



**Allan Leighton**  
Executive Chair, Asda



**Paul Lewis**  
Firmwide Managing Partner,  
Linklaters LLP



**Lord Mark Price**  
Founder, WorkL



**Bob Wigley**  
Chairman, UK Finance

“

*By enabling business leaders to see first-hand the challenges communities face, together we can contribute ideas towards sustainable solutions and use our time, expertise, and resources in a positive way. I am proud that the firm now stands squarely behind the programme, and I am committed to maintaining a leading role in wider partnerships.*

”

Paul Lewis, Firmwide Managing Partner,  
Linklaters LLP  
Strategic Partner, The King's  
Seeing is Believing

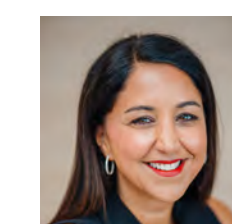


“

*The programme is much more than just seeing and listening. Crucially, it is about the decisive action businesses can take to help address societal challenges. By working together, we can achieve great things.*

”

Zahra Bahrololoumi CBE, EVP and Chief  
Executive Officer, Salesforce UK & Ireland  
Strategic Partner, The King's  
Seeing is Believing







# A unique opportunity for business leaders

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

**A unique opportunity for business leaders**

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

The King's Seeing is Believing programme, first established in 1990 by His Majesty King Charles III, is one of the most well-established and widely respected, experiential leadership programmes in the UK.

Since it began, it has brought more than 25,000 business leaders out of the boardroom and into the hearts of communities to challenge their assumptions, confront inequality and enact change.

The programme provides a powerful way for businesses to engage first-hand with the key issues communities face today. Ultimately, it offers business leaders a chance to redefine their role in shaping a fairer and greener society.

The King's Seeing is Believing programme operates in all corners of the UK, focusing on the areas of greatest need.

**Each visit is unique to its locality, while taking a consistent approach to:**

- Identifying the most pressing and relevant issues in the community
- Showcasing examples of solutions already at work
- Scaling change through individual and collaborative business action.

## Business leaders attend visits to:

- Enhance their understanding of the interconnectivity between issues
- Demonstrate personal and organisational leadership through strategic engagement in a place or on an issue
- Make a direct positive impact on communities through immediate and longer-term action
- Engage and collaborate with senior peers and community stakeholders
- Take learning back into the business to enhance or reshape their strategies.

“

*The King's Seeing is Believing programme is a powerful initiative that allows business leaders to see how much of an impact business interventions can have on people's lives. It has been a catalyst for the continuous work of The Coventry Leaders' Network, which is committed to transforming the communities in Coventry that need it most.*

”

Steve Hughes, Group Chief Executive Officer, Coventry Building Society







# Enabling change: The synergy between The King's Seeing is Believing and Pride of Place

Business in the Community's Pride of Place programme (in partnership with Aviva) helps places across the UK take ownership of their futures and tackle their most pressing challenges. Whilst BITC has been delivering Place-based interventions since its inception, the programme in its current format has been operating since 2016 and is now established as 'The Pride of Place programme' in 18 places across the UK.

Pride of Place provides the long-term vision. The King's Seeing is Believing visits are a powerful way to bring this ambition to life. Business leaders engage with real people and the challenges they face in context. The visits spark fresh understanding, build trust with community partners, and help turn national influence into practical, place-led action.

## Pride of Place and Seeing is Believing visit locations

Belfast\*  
Bradford  
Coventry  
Glasgow\*  
Hounslow  
Newport  
Norwich  
Rhondda Cynon Taf  
Rochdale  
Tees Valley

## Seeing is Believing visit locations

Burnley  
London  
Manchester

## Pride of Place locations

Blackpool  
Bristol\*  
Colchester\*  
Lowestoft  
Sheffield  
Southampton\*  
Wisbech  
York

*\*Pride of Place coming soon*







# Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

The King's Seeing is Believing programme starts with individual places, but the insights gained hold powerful potential to influence change at a national level.

Over the past year, BITC has continued to engage with business and community leaders involved in the visits, identifying shared challenges and surfacing opportunities for business-led, collaborative interventions—both locally and nationally.

Through this work, a set of common issues has emerged across the visits, highlighting where business can drive meaningful impact, using Business Action Forums as a platform for sharing learnings and agreeing collaborative solutions.

## 1 Poverty and food insecurity

Persistent challenges in ensuring basic needs are met, especially among families and vulnerable groups.

## 2 Raising aspirations and widening horizons for children and young people

The need to broaden young people's understanding of opportunities available to them and to build ambition for their futures.

## 3 Barriers to skills and employment for disadvantaged groups, young people and job seekers

Young people in high-deprivation areas, including those who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) and from ethnic minority backgrounds, facing structural and systemic barriers to work.

## 4 Youth safety and prevention of exploitation

Lack of safe spaces and support services puts young people at risk of involvement in gangs, county lines, crime and antisocial behaviour.

## 5 Expanding the role of community organisations

Local charities and grassroots initiatives increasingly provide critical support in education, employment pathways, and mental health—but face sustainability and capacity challenges.

### Business Action Forums

Our Business Action Forums provide platforms for business leaders to join forces with to drive change. Collaborate with peers, address urgent issues, and create solutions that benefit both businesses and communities.

The Forums are focused and intimate, offer flexible engagement and offer opportunities for confidential collaboration and collective innovation.

[Get involved](#)

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you



# Glasgow

## VISIT DATE:

March 2025

## VISIT LED BY:



Roisin Currie CBE, Chief Executive Officer,  
Greggs plc







# Learning from lived experience of industrial decline in Glasgow

Once a thriving industrial city, Glasgow is still experiencing the results of the decline of heavy industry leaving it with an array of socioeconomic challenges including entrenched poverty, unemployment and social dislocation.

Efforts to address these challenges saw Drumchapel becoming the first ward in Scotland to be part of BITC's Pride of Place programme in 2024 and to host the King's Seeing is Believing visit in 2025. On the visit to Glasgow business leaders learned about the value of hyperlocal initiatives and multistakeholder collaborations for tackling complex, entrenched issues within communities.

The visit led to immediate commitments and declarations of support from Greggs, Wheatley, Sodexo, Orb Group and Emcor, to name a few, with grants and in-kind donations bolstering the existing efforts of local community groups. Plans to strengthen relationships between businesses and community groups for long-term collaboration, to share practical skills and to scale successful initiatives are now taking shape.

## What did business leaders learn?

Personal stories from people with lived experience of food poverty, unemployment and lack of opportunity were shared with business leaders during a visit to **Drumchapel Community Centre**. Delegates heard from several community initiatives including **Friendship House**, **G15 Thriving Places**, **G15 Youth Project**, **Drumchapel Community Larder** and **3D Drumchapel**.

The visit's 16 delegates heard how these projects provide a lifeline to the local community and saw the value of hyperlocal initiatives for addressing challenges in the areas of greatest need. This included access to safe spaces, provision of advice, advocacy, clothing and food.

At **Men Matter Scotland**, delegates witnessed how tailored interventions—including peer support, wellbeing programmes and housing assistance—offered individuals the stability needed to rebuild their lives and to begin contributing to their communities. Wraparound services from the **Simon Community** for people facing homelessness provided an example of the importance of collaborative efforts and a call to businesses to work in partnership with the third sector to tackle complex social issues.

Individuals facing multiple barriers to work met with delegates exploring **Wheatley Works**, Wheatley Foundation's flagship employability programme. Among its successful initiatives are modern apprenticeships, which combine paid work with recognised qualifications, and the Changing Lives programme, which supports people in challenging circumstances to re-engage with training and employment.

Delegates said they left the visit with a deeper appreciation of how businesses can play a role in enhancing or replicating successful interventions to scale social impact.

## KEY ISSUES

Poverty and food insecurity; barriers to skills and employment for disadvantaged groups; expanding the role of community organisations.

## 4.4%

of 16-64-year-olds in Glasgow are unemployed, significantly higher than the Scottish average of 3.3% and the UK average of 3.7%

## 3 in 10

young people aged 16-24 in Glasgow are economically inactive, compared to one in four 16-24-year-olds in Scotland and one in ten 16-24-year-olds in the UK

## 14%

of adults in Scotland experience food insecurity, an increase from 9% in 2021

“Attending the visit to various initiatives in Drumchapel was truly insightful. The response of both individuals and the community to an array of challenges was inspiring. It has provided me with a great insight into how a business like Mott MacDonald can provide support but also for us to learn too.”

Alan Hendry, Sustainability Director,  
Mott MacDonald Group



Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

**Glasgow**

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you





Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

**Glasgow**

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

# Learning from lived experience of industrial decline in Glasgow

## What was the business response?

The visit led to immediate commitments and declarations of support from businesses, which included **BT, Greggs, Wheatley Group, Sodexo, Orb Group, Mott MacDonald, Pinsent Masons, Skyscanner** and **Emcor**. Their immediate support covered thematic areas of partnerships, volunteering, employment, wellbeing, resources, and communication.

In the short time since the visit, both Men Matter Scotland and Food Pantry have received community grants from both **The Greggs and Wheatley Group Foundation**. This enables the purchase of equipment to upgrade the cooking facilities. Additional members of the Men Matter team and Food Pantry will be able to prepare and serve food to members, thanks to food hygiene certification provided by **Greggs**. Talks are also underway for Greggs to provide fresh bread, scones, margarine, tea and coffee on a regular basis to both organisations.

**Sodexo** has offered volunteer support from their chefs who will run cookery classes, which provides families with a healthier and cost-effective option at mealtime. The Simon Community will benefit from skilled volunteers too, as **Pinsent Masons** has offered their legal skills to assist those moving on from homelessness.

3D, the local service that focuses on families, will receive donations of children's clothing from **Orb Group**, mitigating the cost-of-living crisis for young families.

Businesses have provided immediate support and are learning in parallel from these community groups by inviting them to speak to their own internal teams and by sharing knowledge and understanding. This is particularly the case with men's mental health, with the **Wheatley Group** exploring the opportunity to provide a space within its housing association for this support to be offered, making it more accessible to the community.

The immediate support from these businesses will influence and assist the work of the recently formed Pride of Place partnership in Glasgow which has its inaugural board meeting in the Autumn 2024. And the longer term may result in partnerships to tackle the supply of food and other initiatives, which require ongoing commitment.



“

*The King's Seeing is Believing programme is a testament to the power of collaboration between businesses, local government and community organisations, and of the true impact that can come from businesses supporting their local communities. I am confident that the visit will lead to some meaningful actions taken by the businesses that attended.*

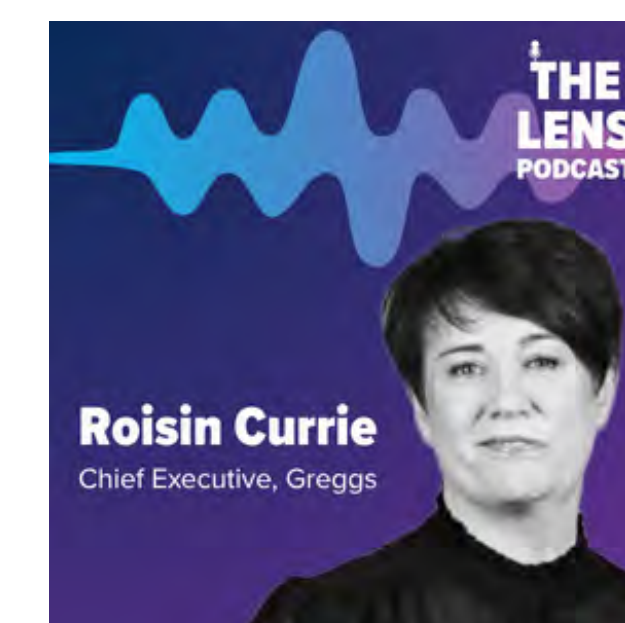
”

Roisin Currie CBE, Chief Executive Officer, Greggs plc



## Immediate results

- **£5,000** in small grants awarded to Men Matter, Drumchapel Food Pantry and Wheatley Foundation from the Greggs Foundation and the Seeing is Believing programme.
- **Ongoing fresh food deliveries:** two local organisations, including logistics and delivery driver time, provided and co-ordinated in-kind by **Greggs**.
- **Professional training**, including food hygiene certification, and digital mentoring support for young people, provided in-kind from **Greggs** and **Sodexo**.
- **New wellbeing and employability programmes** launched in Drumchapel through **Wheatley Foundation**, with local drop-ins and discussion groups in development.
- **Basic cookery classes and surplus food donations** for Men Matter and Food Pantry are being planned with **Sodexo** chefs and supply chain teams. This will benefit more than 700 registered members of Men Matter and their families and those who use the Food Pantry.
- **New partnerships brokered** between corporates and frontline organisations, unlocking practical support across food, skills, and housing.



The Lens – Putting business at the heart of communities is essential for everyone



# Newport

## VISIT DATE:

June 2025

## VISIT LED BY:



Paul Lewis, Firmwide Managing Partner,  
Linklaters LLP







# Connecting disadvantaged communities with job opportunities in Newport

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

**Newport**

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

As Wales' third largest and fastest growing city, Newport is home to diverse and resilient communities with significant untapped potential.

Employment opportunities in Newport are expanding, with the city now boasting the eighth-largest workforce in Wales. This growth is driven by significant developments and new opportunities, particularly from major employers like KLA, IQE, Vantage Data, Airbus, AB Ports, CAF Rail, Celtic Manor, the Patent Office, and the Office for National Statistics.

Yet many of Newport's residents continue to face persistent poverty, inequality, and limited access to fair, sustainable employment.

BITC has been working in Newport since 2022, with a Seeing is Believing visit in June 2023 that paved the way for long-term change, followed by a second visit in June 2025 to build on the progress achieved.

Business leaders on the visit clearly saw the urgent need to bridge the gap between employers and communities facing barriers to work. They also saw the power of addressing basic needs, like food, in order to pave the way for individuals to take up opportunities.

Numerous partnerships are underway to provide work exposure and, employment and skills, to address food poverty, and to tackle energy costs, with businesses recognising their role in ensuring access to opportunities for all.

## What did business leaders learn?

Through a guided walk of the Maindee ward, a visit to **Maindee Primary School**, and conversations at **Community House** with youth workers and local organisations, 18 senior business leaders saw how persistent poverty, inequality, crime, and limited access to safe spaces shape the daily experiences and future prospects of young residents.

Residents and community leaders highlighted employment, skills and food poverty as major barriers and delegates had the chance to consider how deeply entrenched social and economic challenges can undermine education, wellbeing, and aspirations, creating barriers to skills development and employment.

The issue of food poverty was explored at **Alway Community Centre** where delegates visited the **Collection Point initiative**, established following a 2023 Seeing is Believing visit. This practical, community-led response to basic needs was developed through collaboration between GAVO, Celtic Collection, and Newport City Council. It demonstrated how tackling immediate food needs can open up pathways to greater financial resilience, improved wellbeing, and future employment.

Business leaders also came face-to-face with the contrast between Newport's growing economy and the situations of many local residents, especially those from disadvantaged communities, who were unable to access new jobs being created.

At **KLA**, a major local employer, they gained a deeper understanding of the urgent need to bridge the gap between economic growth and local inclusion. Delegates were challenged to consider how businesses can work in partnership to design interventions such as schools outreach, skills development and apprenticeships to ensure that residents are connected to sustainable employment pathways.

## KEY ISSUES

Poverty and food insecurity; raising aspirations and widening horizons for children and young people; barriers to skills and employment for disadvantaged groups; expanding the role of community organisations.

“

*Since the last Seeing is Believing visit I led in Newport in 2023, I've been blown away by the level of commitment we've seen from business leaders to address the challenges facing those living and working in Newport—challenges that are leading to high levels of deprivation and inequality in the area. The positive impact we've seen shows just what can be achieved when businesses, community organisations and local councils work together to drive long-term change at pace and scale. It is a testament to the effectiveness of the King's Seeing is Believing programme, helping business leaders to see first-hand the barriers that communities face and the difference they can make. I hope this visit will do the same and help to benefit Newport for many years to come.*

”

Paul Lewis, Firmwide Managing Partner,  
Linklaters LLP  
Strategic Partner,  
The King's Seeing is Believing



The Lens – Putting business at the heart of communities





# Connecting disadvantaged communities with job opportunities in Newport

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

**Newport**

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

## What was the business response?

Employers have stepped forward to work alongside local partners to address issues such as youth engagement, skills development, food security and poverty. Despite the visit taking place very recently, number of pledges has already been made and implementation plans are under way:

### Volunteering and Mentoring Support

Several individuals and organisations offered their time and expertise to support local initiatives. Colleagues from **Enterprise Mobility** are already volunteering at Community House and have offered to provide strategic guidance to financial sustainability. **KLA** expressed an interest in increasing their volunteering in schools in Maindee. **Thomas Carroll** is keen to get more involved and can support through volunteering and health and safety training. **Eversheds** has shared that many of its colleagues already work closely with schools, offering reading support, interview preparation, and mentoring. **Verizon**, a technology company, is open to offering volunteer time to provide HR and strategic advice. As a group, there is a shared commitment to broadening young people's horizons through mentoring and exposure to real-world work environments.

### Pro Bono and Professional Services

Legal and strategic pro bono support was a strong theme. **Linklaters** committed to explore whether their legal charity partners who support young people at risk of school exclusion could help individuals and families through Community House. It will connect with **Eversheds** to explore joint pro bono efforts in Newport.

### Work Experience and Exposure for Young People

A number of organisations are opening their doors to create opportunity for young people. **Celtic Manor** is exploring ways to offer children exposure to workplace experiences. **Linklaters** reaffirmed their commitment to work experience for excluded

youth. **Crown Estate** is keen to explore how career pathways within the business can be made more accessible to young people, including other part of Wales like Port Talbot. **Verizon** offered to host local schoolchildren at their London office for hands-on tech exposure. **AB Ports** is advocating for greater connection between AB Ports and local schools to promote awareness of career opportunities.

### In-Kind and Physical Support

Practical, hands-on support is also being mobilised. **Celtic Manor** is supporting the development of a new kitchen at Community House and will provide a catering kitchen designer to help with the design. **AB Ports** may be able to offer a storage container for a group in need of storage space and is also committed to connecting its staff with schools. Housing associations, **Pobl and Taff Housing**, will be approached to help with materials and labour for the Community House kitchen, specifically sourcing a carpenter, electrician, fitter, and cupboards. The housing representative also committed to investigating ways to improve local environments and connections.

### Community Programme Delivery

New ideas for delivering impactful community programmes were also discussed. **Pobl** highlighted the need to address mental health, teenage pregnancy, and domestic violence, and suggested delivering health and wellbeing initiatives in engaging, accessible ways. Pobl also has access to commercial city centre spaces that could be used for programme delivery. Jane Mudd, Police and Crime Commissioner at **Gwent Police**, shared her commitment to building trust within the Roma community, and is open to new proposals that can be incorporated into future funding bids. **Professor Simon Gibson CBE** reaffirmed his commitment to supporting the Pill area and is exploring food supply solutions through the Country Food Trust and BITC members in food retail. He is also interested in extending school-based consent and sexual violence awareness programmes in collaboration



The King's Seeing is Believing Visit – Newport 2025







Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

**Newport**

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

# Connecting disadvantaged communities with job opportunities in Newport

with Jane Mudd. Additionally, there is a collective desire to give Roma children experiences beyond the Maindee area, contributing to inclusion and integration.

This visit demonstrated the role of business in driving place-based change by convening delegates, connecting with communities, and contributing meaningfully to long-term solutions. Whether through skilled volunteering, strategic investment, or pro bono expertise, the momentum from the Newport visit will be sustained through newly formed partnerships, commitments, and a shared determination to tackle systemic issues, such as food insecurity, youth violence, and inequality. From upgrading vital community infrastructure to supporting young people at risk of exclusion, business leaders have pledged to stay engaged and to work collaboratively with grassroots organisations to create a lasting impact in Newport.



## Impact in numbers

Since the first visit in 2023 and to date:

- More than **£500k in funding** attracted from public and private sources by the Newport Pride of Place Programme
- **30 businesses engaged**
- **7,000 people** supported through a range of community and education-based initiatives
- **£70,000 donated** to local charities
- **150 charities** and schools supported
- **243 survey responses** from local residents
- **86 community organisations** met to assess current and future challenges
- **600 families** received energy-saving kits, including smart thermostats and LED bulbs
- **1,500 children** received gifts and meals as part of the Christmas Extravaganza with plans in place by Celtic Collection to deliver multiple Christmas events across Newport in December 2025
- **30,000 meals** will be distributed to community groups and individuals by the end of 2025





# Coventry

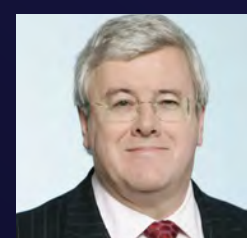
## VISIT DATES:

May 2022, October 2023, November 2024

## VISITS LED BY:



Zahra Bahrololoumi CBE, EVP and  
Chief Executive Officer, Salesforce UK &  
Ireland



John Allan CBE, Former Chairman,  
Tesco plc and Barratt Developments plc







Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

**Coventry**

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

# Tackling poverty and creating opportunities in Coventry

Once the thriving heart of the UK's automotive sector, Coventry has, in recent decades, experienced the challenges brought about by the sector's decline. As a result, communities are grappling with job losses, skill gaps, food insecurity and a lack of opportunities for Coventry's young people.

The King's Seeing is Believing visits in 2022, 2023 and 2024 brought together businesses and local stakeholders to better understand the barriers to meeting two key ambitions:

- An end to food poverty and inequality in Foleshill and Longford, the two wards identified as places of high need.
- Support for children and young people in Coventry to reach their full potential and access sustained, meaningful employment, education or training.

Collectively, their support has brokered £200,000 of capital funding for local community hubs to improve their facilities and has boosted involvement in the Coventry Pride of Place partnership—a cross-sector senior leadership board with a long-term commitment to working with local stakeholders on solutions, which is chaired by Group Chief Executive at **Coventry Building Society**, Steve Hughes.

## What did business leaders learn?

Students at **Grace Academy** told business leaders how multiple challenges affect their mental health, engagement, and educational outcomes, shaping their experiences and aspirations. Delegates learned about the complex circumstances their families live with, and the critical role schools play—not just in education but as hubs of early intervention and support.

Going to the heart of Coventry's most disadvantaged communities at **Feeding Coventry**, delegates learned how poverty, health inequalities, housing, and food insecurity were

affecting people's life chances. Meetings with local leaders showed how interconnected these issues are.

Key employment barriers—including digital exclusion, limited access to training, low confidence, and complex personal issues—were explored at **St Francis Employability** in conversation with its Chief Executive. A tour of the facilities and discussions with support workers and service users revealed how tailored, person-centred support can open sustainable pathways into work.

One organisation addressing the complex challenges that vulnerable young people in Coventry face is **Positive Youth Foundation** (PYF). Delegates saw how a relational, holistic youth service can build trust-based relationships that empower individuals. They learned how PYF's programmes span education, employment, health, arts, social action, and English as a Second Language (ESOL) in response to the needs of this community.

Across the sessions, business leaders learned from lived experiences within Coventry's communities, gaining deeper insight into how multiple areas of disadvantage are compounded for young people and job seekers.

Delegates saw the value of early intervention, the power of inclusive employability support, and joined-up, community-led solutions. The visits demonstrated the need for long-term, cross-sector collaboration to achieve lasting change and highlighted the vital role of business in place-based support to create opportunity and inclusion for all.

## KEY ISSUES

Poverty and food insecurity; raising aspirations and widening horizons for children and young people; barriers to skills and employment for disadvantaged groups.

## 1 in 10

people in the West Midlands say they need to rely on community support, such as food banks

## 4<sup>th</sup>

Coventry has the 4th highest level of fuel poverty in England

## 4.8%

unemployment rate in Coventry, compared with the UK average of 3.6%

## 2 in 10

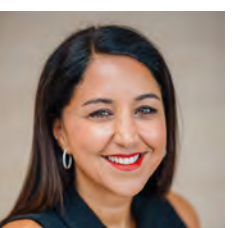
16 – 24-year-olds in Coventry are unemployed, compared to the UK national average of one in 10

“

*Seeing is Believing uniquely connects business leaders directly to communities to better understand the challenges of education, employment, skilling, and social mobility that local urban communities face today. The programme is much more than just seeing and listening. Crucially, it is about the decisive action businesses can take to help address societal challenges.*

”

Zahra Bahrololoumi CBE, EVP and Chief Executive Officer, Salesforce UK & Ireland Strategic Partner, The King's Seeing is Believing







# Tackling poverty and creating opportunities in Coventry

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

**Coventry**

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

## What was the business response?

The visits have brokered over £200,000 of capital funding for local community hubs to improve their facilities. They also led to a number of businesses, including **Salesforce**, **Orbit Housing**, and **AWS**, committing or recommitting to long-term investment in Coventry through the Pride of Place partnership.

**St Francis Employability** has benefited from improvements to its facilities and contributions to its services. A leaking roof was fixed by **Orbit Housing** and its contractors **Fortem**, at a value of £50,000, and **Coventry Building Society** covered the costs of installing running water in the organisation's community café. A donation and staff volunteering from **Cadent Gas** have meant the charity can provide additional support to service users during the winter months, including winter warm packs and advice.

**Feeding Coventry** has benefitted from a long-term partnership with **Salesforce**. The company has developed an online booking system, which now helps the charity to generate income from corporate bookings. The centre has recently refurbished its meeting spaces and has built a community café to provide cooked meals to local residents and, with support from **GoMeddo** and **Sweet Potato Tec – brokered by Salesforce**, it will be able to expand its reach. Staff from Feeding Coventry were invited to attend the **Salesforce** Christmas Fundraiser event in 2023, which has raised £5,000 for the charity and awareness of the work that they do.

**Positive Youth Foundation** continues to receive support from **Salesforce** through funding, business planning and advice. As a charity partner on the Salesforce World Tour at London Excel Centre, its crucial work has received even greater exposure. The foundation also receives support from the **City & Guilds** foundation, who funds a programme run by the charity supporting newly arrived young people.

**Grace Academy**, where more than half of the students don't have any age-appropriate books to read at home, received more than 170 books from **Kaleida**, which also delivered a talk to students. Families in the school community received Christmas hampers, thanks to a £5,000 contribution from **Cadent Gas**.

Since the visit, schools and young people in the area have benefitted from Careers Days and related support from **AWS**, which has also supported Coventry's charities with website development via a Skills Exchange.



Pride of Place: Coventry

## Impact in numbers

- Match funding from **Linklaters**, **National Grid** and **Salesforce** allowing Feeding Coventry to **access £100,000 funding** for development of a community café
- **£50,000 value of a new roof** for St Francis Employability, provided by **Orbit Housing** and **Fortem**
- **£5,000 for Grace Academy** to arrange **Christmas hampers** for families in need, thanks to **Cadent Gas**

“*A fifth of neighbourhoods in Coventry are among the 10% most deprived in the UK. We know that through business collaboration, we can address skills shortages, enable growth in Coventry and make a real change to the city and the lives of those who live and work here.*”

Steve Hughes, Group Chief Executive of Coventry Building Society and Chair of Coventry Leaders' Network





# Tees Valley

## VISIT DATE:

April 2025

## VISIT LED BY:



Louise Kingham CBE, Senior Vice President,  
Europe and Head of Country, bp







Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

**Tees Valley**

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

# Enabling intergeneration action on poverty in the Tees Valley

The decline of steel and other heavy industries has deeply impacted the Tees Valley, with communities struggling with the resultant poverty, unemployment, and economic decline this brought about.

Job losses have triggered a cycle of disadvantage, which includes multi-generational poverty, poor health, low levels of educational attainment, and challenges around aspiration, food and fuel poverty, high crime rates, and environmental deterioration.

Almost 39% of children are living in poverty, compared with a 27% national average, with all five local authorities in the region experiencing higher than national levels of deprivation. In Redcar and Cleveland, for example, 34.2% of households are classified as deprived in one dimension.

In seeking to foster a transformation in the region, Business in the Community has focused on building a high-value, low-carbon, diverse economy, seeking growth in advanced manufacturing, energy, digital, and health sectors.

There is a strong emphasis on ensuring a just transition to tackle climate and environmental problems while leaving no-one behind. The BITC Community Climate Fund has provided funding, expertise and partnerships, with funding from **bp**, making Tees Valley among the first of 25 [Just Transition](#) Hubs across the UK.

On The King's Seeing is Believing visit, business leaders learned how schools could act as a hub for community wellbeing, tackling poverty and food insecurity while expanding horizons through education and business engagement. They saw the benefits of fostering positive intergenerational relationships, keeping community assets within community control and how innovating to reach the UK's net zero targets can contribute to supporting local communities.

Business investment and initiatives to support the local school and a range of community groups are now being planned thanks

to the powerful connections made as a result of the visit to support and expand existing work.

## What did business leaders learn?

An inspiring Head Teacher at **Dormanstown Primary School** showed 20 business leaders how a school can act as a hub for both learning and community wellbeing. The school is not only supporting educational attainment but also addressing poverty and food insecurity through a refill scheme for essential toiletries and a low-cost farm shop.

Delegates heard how the school is engaging with local employers to offer students real-world skills and to instil social responsibility at an early age, broadening their horizons and work opportunities. They saw how Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) initiatives support a better childhood, learning that childhood has changed and many children no longer have their play needs met outside of school. The programme also helps to tackle anti-social behaviour in the locality.

The importance of social infrastructure as a foundation for wellbeing and inclusion was apparent at the **Corus Club**, where delegates met the **Ladies of Steel**, a community group providing intergenerational support and activities, including a youth club. The initiative fosters resilience, reduces isolation, and engages young people in meaningful, supportive environments.

## KEY ISSUES

Poverty and food insecurity; realising aspirations – if you can't see it, how can you be it! and widening horizons for children and young people; barriers to skills and employment for disadvantaged groups; lack of safety and prevention of exploitation.

## 25.9%

of working-age people in the North East are economically inactive

## 38.7%

of children in Tees Valley and County Durham are in poverty

## 24%

workers in the Tees Valley Combined Authority are in severely insecure work

## £75

amount by which workers earn below the national average on a weekly basis

“

*The King's Seeing is Believing visit was a great opportunity to talk with the local community and businesses about how we can work together to support economic regeneration in the region and to see the valuable work of some amazing local organisations. We look forward to continuing our work with BITC as part of the Community Climate Fund to support communities in the Tees Valley.*

”

Louise Kingham CBE, Senior Vice President, Europe and Head of Country, bp







# Enabling intergeneration action on poverty in the Tees Valley

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

**Tees Valley**

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

Delegates experienced what's possible when local residents take ownership of community assets at **Grangetown Generations**, where they learned about successful efforts to save a local centre and library and transform it into a lifeline for the area.

In addition to grassroots projects, delegates also visited the cutting-edge **Net Zero Industry Innovation Centre**, a key part of the UK's green industrial revolution. The centre is building the region's net zero capability, attracting high-skilled jobs and economic investment.

Delegates saw how collaboration between universities, government, and industry can stimulate innovation and inclusive growth, especially when these opportunities are connected back to local communities through education, training, and employment pathways.

Overall, the visit demonstrated the complex challenges communities face, while also showcasing the ways in which local initiatives are already making a difference. It highlighted how the positive impact of existing community initiatives could be amplified with greater business support.



“

*Having 20 influential business leaders visit Grangetown Generations is a first for us, and the result has exceeded any expectations we might have had! Being able to explain the work of grassroots organisations like ours is so important to building closer connections between business and communities. Whilst businesses might hear and see things, this visit helped them feel and hear first-hand the challenges faced by our community. The SIB programme helps dispel myths and assumptions made about communities like ours in Grangetown, helping businesses to hear practical ways to support communities with their skills and expertise plus talk more about solutions and opportunities to collaborate to achieve greater impact and systems change. Business in the Community's support, along with the Seeing is Believing programme, is accelerating our work by some magnitude, allowing us to achieve our ambitions over the next 18 months instead of 10 years!*

”

Adam Brook, Chief Executive Officer,  
Grangetown Generations



The Lens – Businesses can positively impact communities. How?







# Enabling intergeneration action on poverty in the Tees Valley

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

**Tees Valley**

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

## What was the business response?

The programme was a pivotal moment to accelerate conversations between businesses and community organisations in the Tees Valley.

- **Grangetown Generations** received immediate support in the form of meeting room space and exploring local grants through connection with a local branch manager at **Newcastle Building Society**. Skills and support for the team are being explored with **Sabic and Sembcorp**, while CCTV for the project is being provided through **Beyond Housing**.
- **Dormanstown Primary School** is now working with **Darlington Building Society**, which has offered mentoring to the local community connector and **Newcastle Building Society** to provide educational programmes around finances. STEM Ambassadors, along with support for their careers programme, is being explored with **Sabic**, with possible visits to the company's local site. **British Gas Energy Trust** has also engaged with Citizens Advice to see what increased support they could bring to Dormanstown.
- The community is set to benefit from adult employment opportunities and programmes through **Sabic**, which has connected with the Woodsmith Foundation and is continuing to support Ladies of Steel.
- **Hope Foundation** is benefitting from the active role **Wilton Engineering** is playing in the community, forging connections between local groups and the Gresham Redevelopment Social Value Investment. Hope Foundation is also now connected with **PD Ports**, who is also pursuing connections with other initiatives brought to its attention at the community meal, which it wouldn't have otherwise been exposed to.





# Hounslow

## VISIT DATE:

March 2025

## VISIT LED BY:



John Bason, Chair of Primark and Chair of Hounslow Pride of Place Board







# Addressing deprivation in Hounslow

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

**Hounslow**

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

Hounslow is a borough marked by stark contrasts and significant need. With more than 2,300 asylum seekers and residents speaking 188 languages, it is one of London's most diverse communities. Despite its vibrancy and ongoing regeneration efforts, the borough faces entrenched issues including high unemployment, food and digital poverty, youth disengagement, and poor access to quality education and employment. It is one of the newest places that Business in the Community is targeting for long-term, place-based transformation through Pride of Place partnership and the King's Seeing is Believing visit.

Business leaders witnessed the devastating effects of poverty and lack of opportunity on individuals, families and communities, and they gained an understanding of community efforts already underway. The visit brought home the importance of long-term, consistent support to tackle entrenched issues.

Offers of apprenticeships, pro bono support and long-term partnerships between businesses and community groups are building trust and are kickstarting the process of transformational change.



## What did business leaders learn?

Moving personal testimonies, including those from a former gang member turned mentor and from a grieving mother whose son was killed for resisting gang involvement, brought home the urgent need for change in Hounslow. The 11 business leaders visiting **Hanworth Centre Hub** learned that centres like this are currently sustained by local goodwill rather than stable funding, and they require consistent support to carry on their work.

Delegates saw how **Feltham Community Development Association** was stepping up to support disadvantaged young people, including through its partnership with **Brentford Football Club** to reach and inspire young people through sport.

Young people training in trades such as plumbing, carpentry, and logistics met with business leaders at **West Thames College's Skills Centre**, highlighting how business can expand pathways into work through apprenticeships, mentoring, and practical support.

Many of the business leaders have existing ties to the borough through business operations or employee communities and the visit enabled them to engage directly with grassroots organisations and residents to seek solutions.

## KEY ISSUES

Poverty and food insecurity; raising aspirations and widening horizons for children and young people; barriers to skills and employment for disadvantaged groups.

**25%**

of 19-year-olds in Hounslow do not have a Level 3 qualification

**2.9%**

of young people aged 16–17 in Hounslow are not in education, employment, or training

**4.8%**

unemployment rate in Hounslow, compared with national average of 3.8%

*As business leaders we can drive meaningful change in the communities with the most deprivation. It is my hope that this visit will inspire the collective business actions to bring about that change. By working together and harnessing the work of the Hounslow local authority and community groups we can build a better future.*

John Bason, Chair of Primark, Chair of Hounslow Pride of Place Partnership



The Lens – How can business build a better world?





# Addressing deprivation in Hounslow

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

**Hounslow**

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

## What was the business response?

The visit resonated strongly with delegates, who came to the shared conclusion that the challenges they witnessed cannot be solved by short-term or isolated actions.

Offers of apprenticeships have already been forthcoming from **Berkeley Group** and **ABM**, who have also pledged to expand their Junior Engineering Engagement Programme.

Brentford Football Club's Community Trust is benefitting from pro bono support from **Pinsent Masons**, who are also exploring support for the Hanworth Centre and a mentoring programme for young people.

**Sky** is developing an initiative for care leavers and follow up discussions are continuing with **British Airways** and **Phoenix Group**.

Delegates recognised the unique and powerful role that business can play in reversing cycles of poverty and exclusion, committing to long-term engagement in the borough.

Building on these existing commitments, the aim in Hounslow now is to build on the momentum that has been created, identify the areas of highest need, and ensure that business involvement leads to scalable, measurable improvements in people's lives.

As part of this, a number of other businesses, including **Compass Group**, **Phoenix Group** and **JCDecaux**, are exploring ways in which they can become further involved in the borough. **British Airways** is currently exploring local engagement opportunities that match the needs of its workforce with community priorities.

“

*The power of the Business in the Community (BITC) network has enabled me to experience first-hand the issues encountered by communities that are so close to where I live physically but can appear to be a world apart. By leading BITC's The King's Seeing is Believing visit to Hounslow earlier this year, I see the need, I want to make a difference, and I know that, together with other businesses, we can proactively support Hounslow and the work of community organisations working at a grassroots level.*

”

John Bason, Chair of Primark, Chair of BITC's Hounslow Pride of Place Partnership



The Lens – Weaving a passion for communities within business.





# Norwich

## VISIT DATE:

June 2025

## VISIT LED BY:



Jason Storah, Chief Executive Officer,  
UK&I General Insurance, Aviva







Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

**Norwich**

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

# Improving social mobility in Norwich

Norwich is a city experiencing high inequality. The life expectancy of people living here has disparities of up to seven years between different wards, and more than one third of children in Norwich live in poverty.

Earlham in Norwich is one of its most deprived areas, within the 10% most deprived in England, with significant disparities in life expectancy, educational outcomes, and access to opportunity. Nearly half of local students receive free school meals and many families face barriers to employment, wellbeing, and economic security. A Pride of Place partnership was set up in 2022 with the aim of tackling these issues.

Business leaders visiting Earlham engaged with children and with the head teacher at a local school, learning about the role schools play in holistically supporting children and complex social and emotional needs. They were also exposed to organisations addressing food poverty and housing.

In response, businesses are supporting the installation of play equipment suitable for the children's development needs at a local school, helping to expand a programme to raise children's career aspirations, offering open days and providing food and clothing donations.



## What did business leaders learn?

The Head Teacher at **West Earlham Infant and Nursery School**, where 59% of students live in areas of significant deprivation, explained the school community's complex social and emotional needs.

15 visit delegates learned how schools in the area are delivering whole-child education that goes far beyond academic support. They joined the children during a 'Business Encounter' session, hosted by **Saxon Air**, where the children were learning about their careers as pilots and engineers.

Business leaders explored how food insecurity affects educational, health, and employment outcomes at **Earlham Community Shop**, which tackles food insecurity by providing affordable food and household essentials to families.

Delegates learned how investing in high-quality and energy-efficient social housing can transform lives at **Goldsmith Street regeneration project**, which is supporting families to make ends meet and improve wellbeing.

Overall, the visit highlighted and showcased the power of coordinated, community-led action that brings together businesses, local authorities, and the voluntary sector to co-develop solutions that are practical, scalable, and rooted in local priorities.

## KEY ISSUES

Poverty and food insecurity; raising aspirations and widening horizons for children and young people.

# 20%

of Norwich is considered among the 10% most deprived areas of the country

# 33%

of children live in poverty

# 10<sup>th</sup>

most unequal local authority in England in terms of educational attainment







# Improving social mobility in Norwich

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

**Norwich**

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

## What was the business response?

- West Earlham Infant and Nursery's playground will benefit from remodelling with new equipment suitable for the children's development needs, thanks to support from a number of businesses, led by **Groundwork East**.
- The existing 'Business Encounter' programme for students between the ages of 4 and 18 to engage with local businesses, will be expanded with support from **Briar Chemicals, KLM UK Engineering, Cadent Gas, Mott MacDonald** and **Orbit Group**. This will support children and young people to understand the types of careers available to them and to raise their aspirations.
- Local children and families will take part in an engaging, safety-focused open day at **Briar Chemicals**, featuring fire engines, hands-on STEM demos, and cultural storytelling from staff.
- West Earlham Infant and Nursery School and West Earlham Social Supermarket will receive regular food and clothing donations from **Briar Chemicals**.
- **Cadent Gas** will be providing wrap around services to the Earlham Community shop.
- **Orbit Group** and **KLM** will be bringing their senior Executive teams back to Earlham to engage with the community.
- The **Rigby Group** engaging to share best practice.
- The Norwich Pride of Place Board is welcoming additional board members who will be financially investing in the Norwich Pride of Place programme.

“

*The King's Seeing is Believing visit to Norwich showcased the challenges that people living and working in Norwich are facing and how businesses can collaborate with other as well as businesses, community organisations and the local council to address these challenges and create long-term, meaningful impact.*

”

Jason Storah, Chief Executive Officer, UK&I General Insurance, Aviva



## Immediate results

- **£20,000 secured** to accelerate delivery of Norwich Place priorities – unlocking targeted support where it's needed most.
- **SIB delegates stepping up** – now actively engaged in hands-on volunteering across Norwich.
- **237 pupils reached** – with enhanced Business Encounters expanding aspiration and opportunity.
- **Essential furniture donated** – beds and frames delivered to families in Earlham who were facing urgent need.
- School and community **food resilience boosted** – live negotiations underway to secure ongoing donations.
- **Further conversation taking place** to share best practice with The Rigby Group





# Tackling food insecurity and food waste

## VISIT DATE:

May 2025

## VISIT LED BY:



Paul Drechsler CBE, Lead Non-Executive Board Member, Department for Business and Trade and Trustee, The Felix Project







Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

**London**

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

# Tackling food insecurity and food waste

London remains a city of stark contrasts, with areas of great abundance butting up against areas of unmet need. In the capital, more than 350,000 families face daily uncertainty about where their next meal will come from. Food insecurity, in-work poverty and fragmented support systems continue to lock people out of opportunity.

On the Seeing is Believing visit to The Felix Project in Poplar, business leaders witnessed first-hand the scale and urgency of the food redistribution challenge and the extraordinary impact of coordinated, community-led responses. Business leaders explored how they can work together to reduce food waste, support communities, and drive change, not just in London but also nationally.

Founded in 2016, The Felix Project rescues high-quality surplus food and redistributes it to charities, schools, and community groups. Its work tackles both food poverty and food waste, two issues increasingly linked to the wider challenges of sustainability, inequality and wellbeing.

The Felix Project redistributed 15,864 tonnes of surplus food in 2024—equivalent to 38 million meals—to more than 1,200 organisations across London.

## What did business leaders learn?

Delegates toured the Felix depot and heard vivid stories illustrating the impact of food insecurity—such as children cheering the arrival of a Felix van at school, knowing it meant dinner.

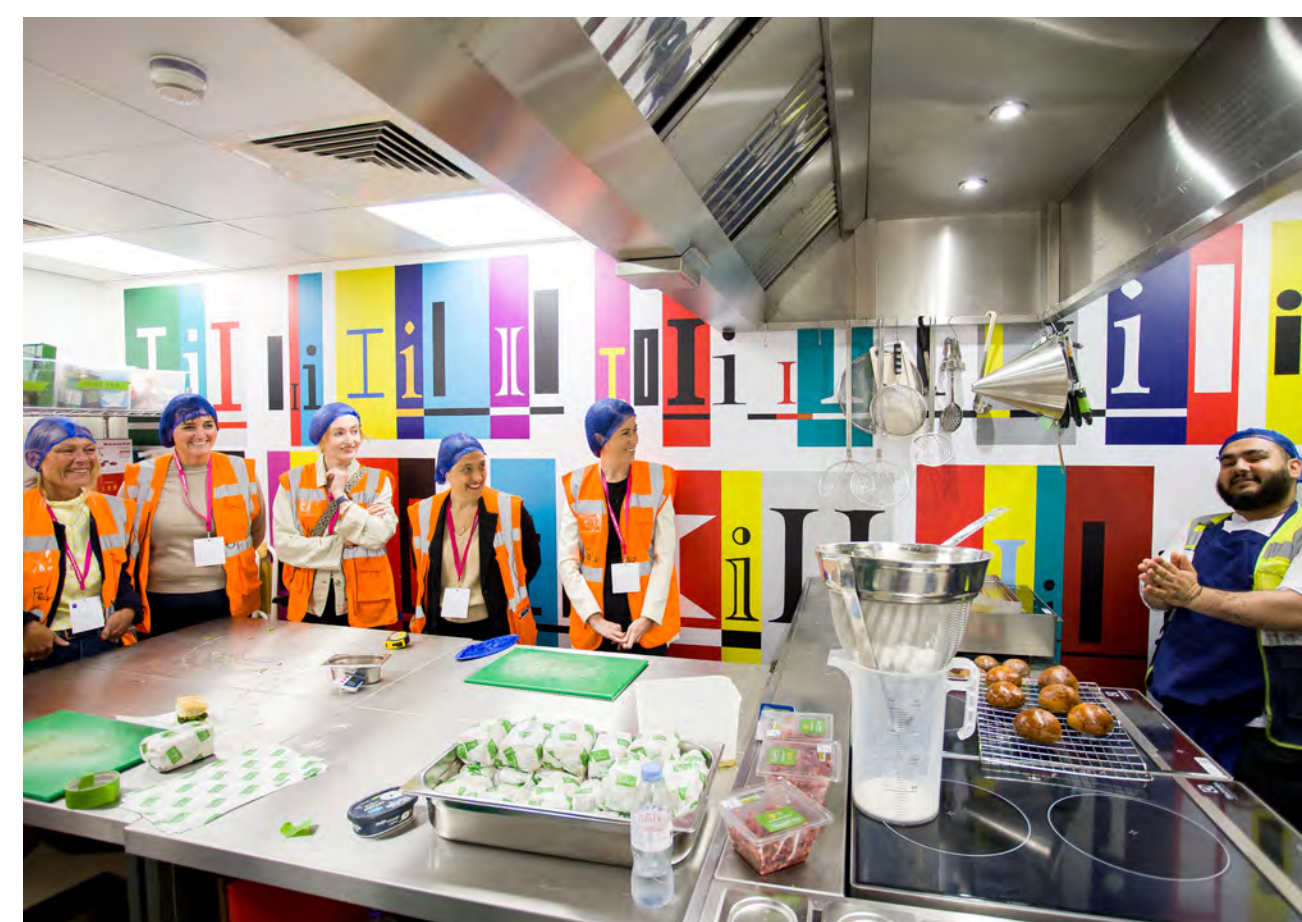
The visit included a session with one of Felix Project's key corporate partners, discussions with community organisation Black Prince Trust, and insights into the systems needed to tackle this issue at scale. Richard Joyce of Black Prince Trust highlighted how engaging directly with community projects

can reconnect business leaders with purpose and impact. The need for champions and advocates within business was a recurring theme.

Discussions covered volunteer culture, scaling through technology, and how to build sustainable partnerships. Leaders reflected on the need for joined-up action—from digital solutions to long-term funding and from corporate advocacy to inclusive volunteering.

## KEY ISSUES

Food insecurity and in-work poverty; tech-enabled scaling of impact; sustainable volunteering and skills sharing; public and private sector collaboration.



## 350,000

families in London who may not have food on any given evening

## 6.4m

tonnes of edible food wasted annually in the UK

## 62m

meals The Felix Project aims to deliver annually by 2026

## 1 in 10

people in the UK and nearly 2 in 10 children experienced food insecurity in 2022/23



The King's Seeing is Believing Visit – The Felix Project, London 2025





# Tackling food insecurity and food waste

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

**London**

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

## What was the business response?

The visit sparked a wide range of follow-up actions from businesses and government representatives. From offering volunteering time and IT support to exploring replication of the Felix model outside London, organisations responded with practical offers and long-term interest.

- 15,000 jute bags will be donated to the project from **Partridges of Sloane Square**, which is also engaging industry guilds in advocacy, and coordinating staff volunteering
- Southampton could benefit from replicating Felix's model thanks to **Simplyhealth**
- Staff volunteering to support the project will be facilitated by **Virgin Money**, and 100 days of volunteering support has been committed by **Simplyhealth**
- The Felix Project will be included in corporate charity nominations at **BNP Paribas**, which is also exploring medium-term partnerships
- IT support and knowledge-sharing is being provided by **Atos** and **Itsu**
- A coordinated, non-political policy paper on food insecurity will be led by BITC following calls from **Schroders** and other businesses.

Paul Drechsler CBE proposed a national campaign, supported by BITC, to raise awareness of food poverty and to encourage creative corporate action, from office space donations to subscription redirections and logistics solutions.

The visit also catalysed a joint policy letter from The Felix Project and FareShare, which BITC is coordinating with its business network. The letter calls for targeted incentives and tax relief to scale food redistribution, with plans to present it to the Government and to amplify it through BITC's network of businesses and other stakeholders.

This visit demonstrated the power of business to convene, connect, and contribute to long-term solutions. Whether through digital tools, practical volunteering, or national advocacy, the momentum from this visit will be carried forward through new partnerships, shared commitments, and a growing movement to end food poverty.



“

*The fact that there is an increasing rate of food insecurity across the UK while there is still so much food going to waste around the country is shocking. Exacerbated by the rise in energy and food prices due to inflation, this leads some households to have to choose between heating their homes or putting food on the table. Organisations like The Felix Project carry out vital work to support in saving surplus food from being wasted and redistributing it to those who need it most. The King's Seeing is Believing visit to The Felix Project not only shed light on the work of this incredible organisation, but also the support that businesses can give and the significant impact they can make to important organisations like this.*

”

Paul Drechsler CBE, Lead Non-Executive Board Member, Department for Business and Trade and Trustee, The Felix Project





# Bradford

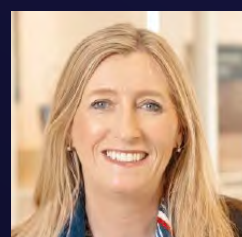
## VISIT DATE:

May 2024

## VISIT LED BY:



Sir Richard Lambert, Chair, Observer  
Editorial Board



Susan Allen OBE, Chief Executive Officer,  
Yorkshire Building Society







# Boosting education and employment opportunities in Bradford

Bradford is the UK's fifth largest metropolitan district and youngest city, with 23% of people aged 15 or under. In communities like Keighley, where 22% of children are living in poverty, high levels of deprivation are combined with low levels of connection to central Bradford and with limited opportunities for this young population.

Keighley is a community experiencing low literacy levels, poor connectivity to Central Bradford, a lack of opportunities for primary and secondary school-aged children, and poor access to training and employment. English is not a first language for a high proportion of residents, and this creates barriers to integration, education, training, and employment.

Business leaders visiting Keighley saw evidence of the widening social mobility gap, learning how they can work collaboratively with local stakeholders to support more equal access to education, training, and employment.

They have so far invested £27,000 into education opportunities, committed to providing employability support and apprenticeships, set up a community fund, launched a volunteer recruitment drive for reading support in schools, and backed Bradford City of Culture initiatives to make the most of creative and cultural opportunities.

## What did business leaders learn?

Beginning with families from the local area at the **Keighley Shipley Family Hub**, the 20 delegates gained powerful insights into the wide-ranging and often complex challenges faced here. They learned how the hub provides accessible, comprehensive, wraparound support for parents, carers, children and young people. From free courses and activities to appointments and drop-in sessions, the services demonstrated the importance of early and sustained local intervention.

The deep-rooted literacy challenges facing children in Keighley were brought to life at **Eastwood Community School**. Delegates gained an understanding of how the school was grappling with entrenched disadvantages linked to poverty and low parental literacy, significantly affecting children's educational outcomes and long-term life chances.

Individuals with successful creative careers who had benefitted from the support of creative and community-led programmes came together with young people accessing support at **Keighley Creative**.

Delegates saw first-hand how role modelling and access to skills-development opportunities can equip the next generation with the tools, networks, and confidence they need to succeed. Partnerships between the education, voluntary, and private sectors were central to this.

Overall, business leaders gained a renewed understanding of how investing in creative, youth-focused initiatives can inspire ambition, unlock talent, and build a stronger, more inclusive local economy.

## KEY ISSUES

Aspirations and widening horizons for children and young people; barriers to skills and employment for disadvantaged groups; expanding the role of community organisations.

**57%**

of households in Bradford show one or more dimensions of deprivation, 5.3% higher than the average in England and Wales

**half**

of Keighley pupils leave primary school without meeting expected standards in reading, writing, and English

**2X**

more unemployment in Bradford than the UK average

*Bradford is a wonderful city with so much to offer; however, people living and working in the area are facing too many unacceptable barriers stopping them from getting on in life . . . Research shows that having low literacy skills impacts a person's future, and this is undoubtedly contributing to the issues we saw on the visit. Addressing literacy levels would be an excellent place to start, and it has clear business benefits.*

Sir Richard Lambert, Chair,  
Observer Editorial Board







# Boosting education and employment opportunities in Bradford



Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

**Bradford**

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

## What was the business response?

Businesses across sectors have taken active steps to support key areas of community need in Keighley—from employability and education to arts and regeneration. They have committed to developing these in partnership with the community, learning what works before expanding them to other parts of Bradford.

Businesses are collaborating to provide support in the following areas:

### Employability and skills

Muse Places have replicated the mentoring programme they have delivered in Oldham for T Level students at Keighley College. CV, interview, and apprenticeship opportunities are now available thanks to **Baillie Group**. Business in the Community is delivering a collaborative employment initiative based on Sheffield's 'See it Be it' programme with **Yorkshire Building Society**, **Yorkshire Water**, **Mott MacDonald** and **Skipton Building Society**. All local primary schools have been offered access to the Kloodle employability tool through the **Manjit Wolstenholme Foundation**.

### Enterprise and Economy

Business in the Community is exploring opportunities for **Santander** to lead our work in coalescing the enterprise ecosystem in Bradford, seeking to plug gaps and ensure support for female founders and under-represented demographics, collaborating with Bradford University's BREE programme.

### Literacy and volunteering

School children have access to reading support, thanks to a volunteer drive to recruit 80 volunteers that **Emerald Publishing** led and which was supported by the local Literacy Taskforce. **Solenis** and **Timothy Taylor's** are contributing to this initiative. Literacy volunteering from local SMEs is being made possible with funding from the Keith Howard Foundation. Keighley Council has donated funding for 10 reading volunteers (£3,400) for which a consortium of SMEs is being sought in Keighley.

### Education and schools

The Education Alliance for Life Chances—which uses a collective impact model to bring together schools, public services, voluntary organisations, and academic research institutions to improve life chances in Bradford—has received £20,000 from **Lady Lynne Morrison**. Eastwood Community School has received a total of £7,000 from **Bloomsbury Publishing** and **Timothy Taylor's**, and The Rainbow Family Centre has also received £2,000 from **Timothy Taylor's**.

### Creative and cultural investment

Keighley Creative has also received £2,000 from **Timothy Taylor's** and is now receiving leadership mentoring, strategy development, and a planned consultation on future use of City Village for film production from **Muse Places**, with **Timothy Taylor's**, **Solenis**, and **Vanquis** all contributing funding or in-kind support. As a result, Keighley Creative's new Executive Director, Riaz Meer, has been linked into strategic conversations, including with BD2025 and CH4, around the Stockroom Cinema. Funding for this has been confirmed to April 2026, ensuring investment in the creative arts and a great asset for the community.

### City of Culture and literature

Bradford City of Culture activities has received sponsorship and volunteering support from **Burberry** and from the **Taylor Bennett Foundation**. **Burberry** is also supporting the Bradford Literature Festival, which continues to offer a year-round cultural outreach programme, as well as supporting projects working with refugees, children in care, and women's centres.

### Local leadership and Levelling Up engagement

A regular Keighley Sounding Board, which evolved from a scrutiny session on council Levelling Up plans, now meets every six weeks. It involves business leaders, including **Timothy Taylor's** (Chair), **Ex-Pressed Steel Panels** and **Future Transformations**, Keighley Laboratories, Clarion Solicitors, Keighley Creative, Bradford Council, Keighley Towns Fund Chair. It also has representation from Highfield Community Centre and from the Inner City Peoples Project.

### Community funding

Local causes now have access to quarterly funding opportunities through a community fund established by **Timothy Taylor's**, where selections of the initiatives to invest in is done by its board. In January, another £5,000 was donated to the Keighley Imagination Library.

This comprehensive business response to the King's Seeing is Believing visit in Keighley has shown a strong and growing commitment to working in partnership with local organisations, schools, and residents to improve life chances, unlock opportunity, and drive inclusive growth in Keighley.





# Boosting education and employment opportunities in Bradford

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

**Bradford**

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

## Impact in numbers

- **£27,000 raised** so far in direct donations for education and school support
- **40 volunteers** are now providing school reading support, with ambitions to double this
- **£16,000 has been donated** to local causes through the Timothy Taylor's fund
- **165 young people** have received employability support through a collaborative employment programme currently being delivered as a pilot

“

*The Seeing is Believing visit to Bradford has provided an important reminder of some of the challenges faced by people across the country. It's in our interest as business leaders to support the communities we serve and in which our colleagues live and work. By helping people reach their potential, businesses can reap the benefits from creating a talent pool of diverse employees and thriving local economies.*

”

Susan Allen OBE, Chief Executive Officer, Yorkshire Building Society





# Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

## VISITS DATE:

Tower Hamlets, London – May 2024

Manchester – June 2024

Brent, London – November 2024

## VISITS LED BY:



Paul Drechsler CBE, Lead Non-Executive Board Member, Department for Business and Trade and Trustee



Steven Cooper CBE, Chief Executive Officer, Aldermore Group



Richard Iferenta, Partner & Vice Chair, KPMG







# Unlocking opportunities for young people in Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

**Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester**

Wisbech

Thank you

Over the past year, The King's Seeing Believing visits to Manchester, to Brent, and to Tower Hamlets in London have sought to provide senior leaders with a better understanding of youth employment challenges.

Delegates learned how barriers to work are shaped by socio-economic inequality and compounded by race, gender, disability, care experience, and geography. This creates a complex web of disadvantage that affects young people's abilities to thrive in education and the labour market.

Many young people are being left behind. Nationally, more than 850,000 young people aged 16–24 are currently NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), a number that continues to rise. More than half of these young people report feeling hopeless about their future, with limited exposure to career opportunities or employer engagement during their education.

In places like Brent, one of London's most diverse yet economically challenged boroughs, young people from ethnically diverse backgrounds face disproportionately high unemployment and low levels of qualification. Many of these young people report that they received little or no employment support and were never visited by employers while at school.

Employer action is desperately needed to create inclusive and practical pathways into work.

As a result of these visits, businesses have stepped up to offer apprenticeships, have joined forces to provide experiences of the workplace, have invested into inclusive recruitment, and have committed to mentoring and support for diverse talent.

## What did business leaders learn?

Across the visits, a number of key themes presented themselves to delegates. First, by visiting local schools, business leaders witnessed how education alone is not enough.

## Partnership with Youth Futures Foundation

The King's Seeing is Believing visit to Brent was delivered in partnership with the Youth Futures Foundation. Launched in 2024, Talent Unlocked is a three-year partnership between BITC and Youth Futures Foundation, empowering employers to tap into the potential of young professionals aged 16-24 from Black, Asian, Mixed, and other ethnically diverse backgrounds.

The partnership aims to support employers to break down barriers for ethnically diverse young people currently out of work, enabling them to enter the workforce.

The purpose of the visit in Brent was to better understand the barriers young people from ethnically diverse backgrounds experience when looking for and sustaining employment, and to explore ways in which businesses can play a role in reducing and eradicating these. A group of pioneer employers are now testing and trialling approaches to changing employer culture and behaviour over the next three years, opening doors to diverse talent.

Delegates saw how schools in low-income communities are increasingly forced to act as social safety nets, addressing basic needs such as food, clothing, and pastoral support.

With poverty remaining closely linked to poor educational outcomes, leaders developed an understanding that without coordinated interventions, the gap between young people's potential and real opportunities will continue to grow.

Second, they learned that a lack of inclusive and practical pathways into work is a major obstacle to young people. With entry-level roles often requiring experience, those without networks, work placements, or internships can find themselves excluded.



Ultimately, the visits reinforced that early, direct engagement from employers is essential and that schools, employers, and community partners must collaborate to introduce young people, especially those from underserved areas and backgrounds, to the world of work much earlier.

Amongst the locations visited in Manchester was the **HideOut**, which provides young people from a diverse range of backgrounds with access to incredible facilities in a vibrant, purpose-built space as well as the opportunity to make friends, develop new skills, unlock their potential and have fun. Opened in 2020 and delivered in partnership with **OnSide Youth Zones** and Manchester City Council, with support from a number of businesses and philanthropists, the HideOut provides a safe space for young people, including many from low socio-economic and often very challenging and chaotic backgrounds.

In Tower Hamlets, the locations visited included the **Mulberry School for Girls**, a high-achieving, over-subscribed and successful girls' comprehensive school for pupils aged 11 to 18. Despite multiple challenges, the school has created an environment in which girls' talents and abilities are nurtured in a safe, creative space.

**Young Brent Foundation** brought young people's voice to delegates, emphasising that all young people—regardless of their background or life circumstances—deserve access to quality jobs and equal employment opportunities.

***A huge thank you to BITC for convening such a meaningful coming together of businesses and youth organisations, so that each can better understand the needs and opportunities of the other with a view to making impactful change.***

Tom Clementi, Chief Executive of Pool Reinsurance







Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

**Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester**

Wisbech

Thank you

# Unlocking opportunities for young people in Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

## What was the business response?

These visits highlighted the scale and complexity of social mobility challenges faced in the areas visited. As a result of the visits businesses agreed that the following actions needed to be taken:

- Create partnerships with organisations that can help understand the barriers
- Challenge recruitment norms that prioritise experience over potential
- Offer inclusive routes into work, such as apprenticeships, traineeships, and supported skill-building programmes
- Commit to practical actions, including guaranteed work experience, school engagement, and bias-free recruitment practices

An example of the commitments these visits have spurred can be seen in the way that Steven Cooper, CEO of **Aldermore Group** (who also serves as Chair of BITC's Employment & Skills Leadership Team), has used the insights gained to initiate collaborative programmes that will look at apprenticeships, mentoring and supported transition to work.

Over the next three years, BITC's partnership with the **Youth Futures Foundation** will see the delivery of a series of The King's Seeing is Believing visits and the development of a group of 15 pioneer employers, who will test and trial approaches to changing employer culture and behaviour.

The visit to Brent has already led **Grant Thornton**, **Worldline**, and **Pertemps** to commit to joining the pioneers programme, and it has spurred **Pool Reinsurance** to become a member of BITC. In addition, BITC will engage at least 100 employers with targeted asks that have been shown to enable NEET young people from ethnically diverse backgrounds to gain and thrive in employment.

The visit to Manchester generated significant focus on apprenticeships from those who attended. **Aldermore**, for example, is scaling up its EDI work, focusing on opening doors to diverse talent. This includes expanding its apprenticeships offer, which will provide opportunities for young people to transition from short-term apprenticeships into full-time roles within the business. The organisation is running 'workplace safaris' that give young people an insight into roles and career opportunities. In addition, after learning about **Co-Op's** apprenticeship levy scheme on the visit, **ABM** transferred £50,000 and is also now revamping JEEP (Junior Engineering Engagement Programme) which is designed to fill the skills gap shortage in its industry.

The Tower Hamlets visit has also led to a number of immediate outcomes, including support to help Mulberry School access funding and apprenticeships, with thanks to **Advantage Creative** and **Aldermore**, respectively. As a consequence of the visit, **Enterprise Rent-a-Car** will move forward with establishing a Place partnership to address social mobility in Bristol and other key places for it.



“

*I was very fortunate to be part of the Seeing is Believing Event this week. Meeting with young people and hearing about their experiences, challenges and their tenacity to join the world of work inspired me to think about how my organisation and I can make a difference and a positive outcome in the future, to help overcome some of these challenges.*

”

Lorraine Stockle, Director of Talent Acquisition  
EMEA, Verizon UK







- Message from The King
- Foreword
- The King's Seeing is Believing Council
- A unique opportunity for business leaders
- Enabling Change
- Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration
- Glasgow
- Newport
- Coventry
- Tees Valley
- Hounslow
- Norwich
- London
- Bradford
- Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester**
- Wisbech
- Thank you

# Unlocking opportunities for young people in Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

The strong focus on apprenticeships resulting from the Manchester visit also promises to deliver further action in future. **Worldline** is reviewing its apprenticeships scheme to see what more can be done to remove barriers around grades. **Irwin Mitchell** is also considering how to broaden the use of the apprenticeship levy, as well as seeking to collaborate with **Aldermore** on ‘workplace safaris’.

Following the Manchester visit, the **Co-operative** and **Newcastle Building Society** expressed an interest in leading a King's Seeing is Believing visit in the future.

After visiting Tower Hamlets, businesses including **Slaughter & May**, **UPS**, **EMCOR**, **Simplyhealth** and **Wates** are exploring ways in which they too could deliver impact in these areas.

“We heard the stark reality of the barriers many young people face when trying to find work. Employers have a responsibility to address these challenges by giving young people the start they need in life to reach their full potential. Supporting young people to learn new skills through training and apprenticeships and remove unnecessary recruitment practices will help employers to close the skills gap, fill job vacancies, and create a talented workforce for the future.”

Steven Cooper CBE, Chief Executive Officer, Aldermore Group





# Wisbech

## VISIT DATE:

July 2024

## VISIT LED BY:



Peter Simpson, Former Chief Executive  
Officer, Anglian Water







# Making a lasting difference in Wisbech



Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

**Wisbech**

Thank you

It was a Seeing is Believing visit to East London in 2013 that spurred Anglian Water's commitment to Wisbech.

Sitting at the heart of Anglian Water's operations, this once thriving capital of the Fens has experienced prolonged underinvestment, which has resulted in the town placing in the bottom 10% nationally for four of the eight leading indicators of deprivation.

To tackle these challenges, Anglian Water and BITC have applied a pioneering place-based approach, with the aim of improving social, economic, and environmental prosperity.

This approach saw Wisbech become an 'anchor' model for partner-led, place-based regeneration and today, ten years on, Anglian Water and its Alliance Partners continue to work collaboratively with the local community to make a lasting difference to local people's lives.

An example of the impact delivered is the new £4 million Green Skills Academy at Wisbech's College of West Anglia.

The Academy has benefited from £2 million in funding from Anglian Water and its alliance partners including Balfour Beatty, Barhale, Clancy, Claret, Costain, Danaher & Walsh, Farrans, Jacobs, Kier, Morrison, Mott MacDonald Bentley, MWH Treatment, Public Sewer Services, Skanska and Sweco.

The project has received a further £2 million of funding from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority's Recycled Local Growth Fund, as well as £200,000 from the College of West Anglia.

## What did business leaders learn?

The King's Seeing is Believing visit to Wisbech provided delegates with an insight into how businesses can approach community-based regeneration and can engage supply chains and other networks to create a systemic and sustained difference in a place of their own.

Visits to three community projects—**The Ferry Project**, **Queen Mary Centre**, and **Wisbech & Fenland Museum** as well as the **College of West Anglia**—demonstrated how to successfully coordinate efforts from the public, private, and non-profit sectors to enable community-led regeneration.

The visit started at **The Ferry Project**, spearheaded by inspirational leader, Keith Smith, who has been a driving force for change, particularly focused on homelessness in Wisbech, for decades. Keith has deep connections throughout the community and was able to demonstrate how having a trusted local community leader on board can generate a level of cooperation locally that would be hard to generate by a business alone. On site 'pods' had been built by the Anglian Alliance partners for entrenched homeless people to help them out of crisis.

Delegates have also visited **Queen Mary Centre**, which has become a focal point for the local community. The centre hosts a diverse range of classes and activities directed at the local community and also houses the Wisbech Donations Hub, which operates in a similar way to a food bank and provides much-needed resources (clothes, household goods, etc) to local people who are struggling with the cost of living.

Walking through the town showed first-hand how this once thriving town has struggled to redefine itself since the industrial revolution. It has sustained underinvestment, particularly in housing and transport, increased levels of deprivation, and low-skilled, low-paid employment.

**10%**

Wisbech sits in the bottom 10% nationally for 4 out of 8 leading indicators of deprivation

**35%**

of Wisbech residents have no qualifications

**3 years**

Life expectancy in Wisbech is 3 years lower than Cambridge

**6<sup>th</sup> lowest**

ranked town national for social mobility

At the College of West Anglia, delegates met members of the Anglian Alliance, and the young people benefitting from their partnership approach to apprenticeships and from where the Alliance's support was evident through its announcement of joint funding to support future skills developments for the area.

## KEY ISSUES

Rural homelessness

Employment and skills

Career pathways and progression for young people





# Making a lasting difference in Wisbech

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

**Wisbech**

Thank you

## What was the business response?

The visit saw **Anglian Water's** new CEO, Mark Thurston reaffirm the company's commitment to the Wisbech Pride of Place programme, re-engaging its Alliance partners in community-based regeneration in Wisbech. As part of this, it was announced that Anglian Water will host an annual 'Focus on Wisbech' showcase to highlight the community's achievements and to raise support for its projects.

A range of other companies have made firm commitments following the visit. **Barhale** has committed to providing strategic guidance to the College of West Anglia's Green Skills Academy and will also help with infrastructure construction in the community farm. The College will also benefit from **Clarets'** commitments to provide assistance with the technical assessments and ground survey needed for its building's expansion plans.

The visit has also led both **Jacobs** and **Capgemini** to commit to expanding the reach of their apprenticeship programmes to include technical apprenticeships and other non-traditional pathways of entry into the workforce.

On top of these commitments, the visit has led to a number of other businesses exploring ways in which they could contribute to delivering further impact in Wisbech. **Aviva** is exploring ways in which the insurance industry engages with social enterprises, to find ways to make their access to insurance easier.

In addition, **Clarion Housing Group**, **Sovereign Network Group** and **Flagship Group** are all investigating ways in which they could improve the engagement of housing associations with the community-led initiatives.

“

*We take our role in the Wisbech Community, which we very much feel part of, very seriously. We were pleased to make a donation to the Wisbech and Fenland Museum which not only provides a fascinating historical perspective on life across the region but also makes such an important contribution to the community today.*

”

Dennis Curran, Chairman, Barhale





**Thank you**







# Thank you to all visit leaders

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

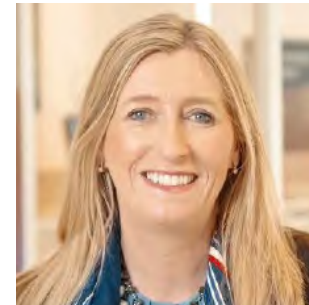
London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you



**Susan Allen OBE**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Yorkshire Building Society



**Zahra Bahrololoumi CBE**,  
EVP and Chief Executive  
Officer, Salesforce UK &  
Ireland



**John Bason**  
Chair of Primark and Chair,  
Hounslow Pride of Place  
Board



**Steven Cooper CBE**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Aldermore Group



**Roisin Currie CBE**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Greggs plc



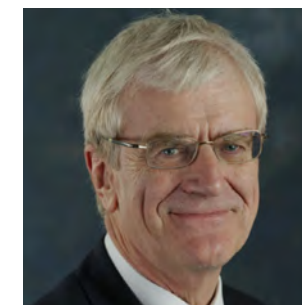
**Paul Drechsler CBE**  
Lead Non-Executive Board  
Member, the Department for  
Business and Trade and  
Trustee, The Felix Project



**Richard Iferenta**  
Partner & Vice Chair,  
KPMG



**Louise Kingham CBE**  
Senior Vice President,  
Europe and Head of  
Country, bp



**Sir Richard Lambert**  
Chair, Observer Editorial  
Board



**Paul Lewis**  
Firmwide Managing Partner,  
Linklaters LLP



**Peter Simpson**  
Former Chief Executive  
Officer, Anglian Water



**Jason Storah**  
Chief Executive Officer, UK&I  
General Insurance at Aviva





Message from The King	■
Foreword	■
The King’s Seeing is Believing Council	■
A unique opportunity for business leaders	■
Enabling Change	■
Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration	■
Glasgow	■
Newport	■
Coventry	■
Tees Valley	■
Hounslow	■
Norwich	■
London	■
Bradford	■
Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester	■
Wisbech	■
Thank you	■

# Delegates by company

ABM	Richard Sykes, President, UK and Ireland	Berkeley Group	Tom Pocock, Managing Director (Berkeley St Edward London)
Action for Race Equality	Jeremy Crook OBE, Chief Executive Officer		Paul Vallone, Divisional Managing Director
Advantage Creative	John Holmes, Managing Director	Beyond Housing	Rosemary Du Rose, Chief Executive Officer
AF Blakemore & Son Ltd	Caoire Blakemore, Shareholder, Group Board Director Head of Food Service	Binnies	Scott Aitken, Managing Director
		Bloomsbury Publishing/ Bradford Literature Festival	
Aldermore Group	Steven Cooper CBE, Chief Executive Officer	BNP Paribas UK	Sir Richard Lambert, Former Chair
Anglo American	Rachel Dolby, Head of Corporate Affairs	bp	Emmanuelle Bury, Head of Country
Associated British Ports	Craig Stephens, Head of Operations		Karen Troup, Head of DE&I for EMEA
Association of British Insurers	Sheryl Fernando, Director of Membership and Commercial Development		Louise Kingham CBE, Senior Vice President, Europe and Head of Country
		Bradford Literature Festival	Lady Lynne Morrison, Advisory Council
Atos	Joanne Deykes, VP Head of Applications and Platforms (DTC) UK&I	Bradford Place Board	Sir David Wootton, Chair
AV Dawson	Angela Turley, Head of Marketing	Briar Chemicals	Chris Fazekas, Chief Executive Officer
Aviva	Andrew Dernie, Senior Manager, Sustainability & Social Impact	British Academic	Dr Paul Flather, British Academic
	Ben Luckett, Chief Innovation Officer	British Gas Energy Trust	Jessica Taplin, Chief Executive Officer
	Jason Storah, Chief Executive Officer, UK & Ireland	BT	Paul Taylor, Managing Director Global Banking
	General Insurance	Burberry	Lise Edwards-Warrener, VP of Ready to Wear, Operations and Supply Planning
Anglian Water	Andy Brown, Chief Sustainability Officer		Alasdair Murdoch, Chief Executive Officer
	Peter Simpson, Former Chief Executive Officer	Burger King	Corin Crane, Chief Executive Officer
	Mark Thurston, Chief Executive Officer	C&W Chamber of Commerce	Emma Turnbull, Sustainability Manager
British Airways	Sean Doyle, Chief Executive Officer	Cadent Gas	Phil Burrows, Head of Customer Vulnerability Delivery
	Carrie Harris, Director of Sustainability		Ranjit Blythe, Managing Director
Bailie Group Limited	Fergus Bailie, Chief Executive Officer	Cadent Foundation	James Forrest, European Vice President Utilities
Balfour Beatty	Phil Clifton, Managing Director, Highways	CapGemini	Julie Hammond, Chief Executive Officer – Celtic Collection & ICC Wales Chair
Barhale	Dennis Curran, Chair	Celtic Manor	
	James Haddon, Director		Patrick Craven, Executive Director for Policy and Stakeholder Partnerships
BBC	Philippa Littlewood, Regional Operations Lead for Scotland and Northeast England	City & Guilds	





# Delegates by company

Message from The King



Foreword



The King's Seeing is Believing Council



A unique opportunity for business leaders



Enabling Change



Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration



Glasgow



Newport



Coventry



Tees Valley



Hounslow



Norwich



London



Bradford



Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester



Wisbech



Thank you



Clarets

Andy Gibbons, Managing Director

Clarion Housing Group

Michelle Reynolds, Chief Operating Officer

Compass Group

Robin Mills, Chief Executive Officer

Construction Industry Training Board

Nicholas Payne, Chief Financial Officer

Co-op

Rebecca Birkbeck, Director Community & Membership Participation

Costain Group

Alex Vaughan, Chief Executive Officer

Coventry Building Society

Lucy Becque, Chief People Officer  
Anna Cuskin, Senior Manager – Corporate Social Responsibility

Coventry University

Chitro Ghose, Regional Engagement Manager

Danaher & Walsh

Ian Gilbert, Commercial Director

Danske Bank

Vicky Davies, Chief Executive Officer

Darlington Building Society

Helen Easton, Chief People Officer

Deloitte LLP

Jo Ahmed, Practice Senior Partner and Honorary Consul of Japan in Manchester

Department for Business and Trade  
Paul Drechsler CBE, Lead Non-Executive Board Member, The Department for Business and Trade; Trustee, The Felix Project  
Caragh McKiernan, Director of Change  
Pauline Crellin, Director

Drax Group

Shona King, Group Head of Community Affairs

Dynamic X Plus

Mahesh Dilhan, Chief Growth Officer

E.ON Energy

Ben Tuck, Social Value Programme Manager

EMCOR UK

Cheryl McCall, Group Chief Executive  
Dave Smith, Operations Lead – North

Emerald Group Publishing

Vicky Williams, Chief Executive Officer

Enterprise Mobility

James A Goodall, Regional Sales Director  
Brian Swallow, Managing Director

Eversheds Sutherland

Kathryn Roberts, Chair

Excelledia

Muhamed Farooque, Founder and Chief Executive Officer

Experian UK

David Bates, Group Managing Director – Consumer Information & Analytics

Flagship Housing Group Limited

David McQuade, Chief Executive

Grant Thornton

Richard Waite, Head of Recruitment  
Jenn Barnett, Director and Head of I&D and ESG

Greater Manchester

Local Enterprise Partnership

Greggs plc

Mike Blackburn OBE, Chair

Lisa Brigham, Corporate Communications Lead  
Roisin Currie CBE, Chief Executive Officer  
Nigel Simpson, Head of International & BITC North East  
Regional Leadership Board Chair

Groundwork East

Carolyn Reid, Chief Executive Officer

Gwent Police

Ian Roberts, Chief Superintendent  
Jane Mudd, Police and Crime Commissioner

Hedyn

Paula Kennedy, Chief Executive Officer

Henry Boot

Adam Brady, Executive Director

Howes Percival

Gordon Simpson, Partner

IAG

Navdeep Deol, Group Employment Law Director

Irwin Mitchell

Louise Lumley, Chief Client Officer

Itsu

Greg Thorp, Chief Financial Officer

Jacobs

Sam El-Jouzi, Major Programmes Delivery Director

Jaguar Land Rover

Jenni Birchenough, Procurement Manager  
Adrian Davey, Global Senior Purchasing Manager  
Rebecca Lloyd-Lakin, Procurement Manager

JC Decaux

Ross McClure, Technical Operations Director  
Carly Stanley, Chief People Officer  
Chris Collins, Co-Chief Executive Officer  
Jack Evans, Senior Policy Advisor

Joseph Rowntree Foundation





# Delegates by company

Message from The King	■
Foreword	■
The King’s Seeing is Believing Council	■
A unique opportunity for business leaders	■
Enabling Change	■
Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration	■
Glasgow	■
Newport	■
Coventry	■
Tees Valley	■
Hounslow	■
Norwich	■
London	■
Bradford	■
Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester	■
Wisbech	■
Thank you	■

Kier Group	Andy Lingham, Managing Director of Natural Resources & Water	Partridges of Sloane Square	John Shepherd, Managing Director
KLA	Huw Williams, Senior Director and Head of Operations	PD Ports	Michelle Robson, Chief People and Compliance Officer
KLM UK Engineering	Wayne Easlea, Managing Director	Pertemps	Susannah Lawson, Operations Director
KPMG	Richard Iferenta, Partner and Vice-Chair		Jamie So, Operations Director
	Mark Russell, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Manager	Pinsent Masons	Melanie Grimmitt, Partner and Head of Clients and Markets
Linklaters LLP	Sophie Brambley, Managing Associate		Matt Peers, Global Chief Operating Officer
	Joanna Keefe, Global Corporate Responsibility Manager	Pobl Group	Laura Cameron, Managing Partner
	Paul Lewis, Firmwide Managing Partner	Pool Reinsurance Company	Solitaire Pritchard, Director of Regeneration
	Matthew Sparkes, Sustainability Director		Tom Clementi, Chief Executive Officer
	Jonathan Tait, Corporate Responsibility Senior Advisor		Georgina Wicken, Chief People Officer
	Jill Baker, Director of Communities, Lloyds Bank Foundation	Primark	John Bason, Chair
Lloyds Banking Group for England and Wales		Principality Building Society	Julie- Ann Haines, Chief Executive Officer
LNER	David Horne, Managing Director	Public Sewer Services	Angie Gawthorn, Financial Director
Advantage Creative	John Holmes, Managing Director	PwC	Jason Morris, Scotland Regional Leader
M Group	Iain Sutherland, Managing Director – Group Services Water Division	Ridge and Partners LLP	Lucy Osborne, Partner
		Rigby Group	Judy Groves, Marketing Director
Mott MacDonald	Brendon Baker, Technical Director, Urban Regeneration	Royal Mail	Jon Nicholson, Managing Director, Sales, Marketing, Customer Experience
	Alan Hendry, Sustainability Director		Jos Visser, Site Director Teesside
	Antony Jackson, Executive Chair	SABIC UK Petrochemicals	Jas Narang, Chief Transformation Officer and Head of Operations
Muse	James Pitt, Yorkshire Managing Director	Santander UK	
Newcastle Building Society	Andrew Haigh, Chief Executive Officer		Peter Harrison, Former Group Chief Executive Officer
	Stuart Miller, Chief Customer Officer	Schroders	Sonia Jenkins, Chief People Officer
North Star Housing Group	James Walder, Group Chief Executive Officer		Mark Devine, Commercial Director
Northern Gas Networks	John Richardson, Chief Operations Officer	SEMBCORP	Antony King, Managing Director Citizen Services, UK&E
Novus	David Leach, Executive Director	Serco	Paul Evans, Community & Education Business Lead
Orb Group	Mike Smith, Chief Executive Officer	Severn Trent	Nicholas Potter, Chief Financial Officer
Orbit Group	Joe Brownless, Chief Customer Officer	Simplyhealth	Simon Clitheroe, Managing Director of Infrastructure
		Skanska UK	





# Delegates by company

Message from The King

Foreword

The King's Seeing is Believing Council

A unique opportunity for business leaders

Enabling Change

Identifying issues for solution-focused collaboration

Glasgow

Newport

Coventry

Tees Valley

Hounslow

Norwich

London

Bradford

Tower Hamlets, Brent and Manchester

Wisbech

Thank you

Sky

Skyscanner

Slaughter and May

Sodexo

Soho House

Solenis

Sovereign Network Group

Taylor Bennett Foundation

Teesside University

Tesco

The Big Issue

The Co-Operative Bank

The Crown Estate

The Forum Norwich

The Phoenix Group

The Urbanist

Thomas Carroll Group

Timothy Taylor & Co. Ltd

University of Warwick

UPS

Vanquish

Nicola Oritis, Group Head of Communities, The Bigger Picture

Myra Fulton, VP of Engineering (Scotland Lead)

Andrew Jolly, Partner

Patrick Forbes, Managing Director, Tech and Services

Tristan Bland, Safety & Operations Manager

David Calder, Site Manager

Mark Washer, Chief Executive Officer

Erica Watts, Head of Employment and Skills

Jamie Ratcliff, Chief Communities and Sustainability Officer

Natasha Ferguson, Chief Operating Officer

Professor Mark Simpson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Lynda Jackson, Apprenticeship and Graduate Talent Acquisition Manager

Samantha Sullivan, Graduate and Apprenticeship Manager

Russell Blackman, Managing Director

Paul McNamee, Editor

Maria Cearns, Chief Operating Officer

Anna Swaithe, Chief Sustainability Officer

Chris Gribble, Chief Executive Officer

Tom Ground, Chief Executive Officer – Retirement Solutions

James Brown, Managing Director

Robert Jones, Relations Director

Tim Dewey, Chief Executive Officer

Rebecca Easterbrook, Regional Partnerships Manager  
Andrew Todd, Professional Services Director

Markus Kessler, Managing Director

Joe Sweeney, Chief Risk Officer

Verizon UK

Virgin Money

VVB Engineering

Wates Group

Welbot

Wesley Clover

Wheatley Group

Whitbread

Wilton Engineering and  
Deputy Lord Lieutenant

Women of the Future Programme

Worldline

Worldline IT Services UK

Yorkshire Building Society

Yorkshire Water

Youth Futures Foundation

Hannah Dauncey, Sales Director, Verizon Business Group,  
Joshua Ellis, Associate Director, UK Acquisitions  
Lorraine Stockle, Director – Talent Acquisition (EMEA)

Syreeta Brown, Chief People Officer  
Lucinda Charles-Jones, Non-Executive Director

Bethany-Rose Horne, Sustainability Advisor  
Andrew Jellis, Chief Executive Officer

Eoghan O'Lionaird, Chief Executive Officer

Ian Smith, Chair

Prof. Simon Gibson CBE DL, Chief Executive Officer

Steven Henderson, Chief Executive Officer

Clare Thomas, Group General Counsel and Company Secretary

Dr Bill Scott OBE DL, Chief Executive Officer

Pinky Lilani CBE, Founder & Chairman

Nicola Purdy, Resource Manager – UK &I  
Paul Smith, Head of Human Resources

Johnny Astbury, Chief Executive Officer

Susan Allen OBE, Chief Executive Officer

Dame Julia Unwin, Non-Executive Director

Barry Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer





Kindly supported by

Linklaters



**Business in the Community**

137 Shepherdess Walk  
London N17RQ

[www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk)  
020 7566 8650

Business in the Community is a registered charity in  
England and Wales (297716)  
and Scotland (SC046226). Company limited by  
guarantee No. 1619253.