

Growth Hub Newsletter

June 2025

Support for your business

Complete Enterprise Oxfordshire's Business Support Tool today, to get started and receive your business support plan signposting you to profit boosting, market growing, fully funded business support:

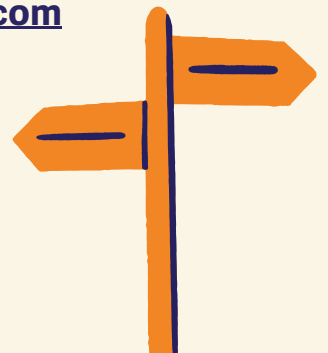
<https://oxlepbusiness.co.uk/business-support-tool/>

Get started...

Complete Enterprise Oxfordshire's Business Support Tool to get started and receive your business support plan signposting you to profit boosting, market growing, fully funded business support:

[Business Support Tool](#)

If you have any questions or requests for support please email us directly at business@enterpriseoxfordshire.com



★ Have you nominated your Business for an Award yet?

Enterprise Oxfordshire Business is pleased to be hosting our yearly Marketplace and Celebration in September 2025. With thanks to our Headline Sponsor, Darcica Logistics, as well as our award sponsors and event supporters. We would also like to thank Velocity Cycle Couriers who are our Headline speakers at this event.

Are you a business in Oxfordshire which has had support from Enterprise Oxfordshire (formerly OxLEP) since April 2022, if you are you can enter the awards.

Award Categories are:

- Socially Responsible Business of the Year
- Manufacturer of the Year
- Innovation in Customer Experience of the Year
- Start-up of the Year
- Business Leader of the Year
- Environmentally Sustainable Business of the Year
- Growth Business of the Year

With Darcica Logistics awarding the 'Overall Winners' award based on the above 7 awards.

To enter nominate your business for an award before 12.00pm 24th June 2024. Details are on the webpage (link above).

Date: Thursday 18th September 2025

Venue: Oxford Town Hall, Oxford

Time: 6.00pm – 9.00pm

Book

Marketplace stands are filling up fast, but there is still time. If you would like a Marketplace stand email business@enterpriseoxfordshire.com for more information.



Enterprise Oxfordshire supporting Oxfordshire SMEs to save energy and reduce their carbon

Enterprise Oxfordshire is working with Oxfordshire County Council, the city and district councils, Oxfordshire Greentech, Low Carbon Hub, and Oxfordshire SMEs, to look at how by working together, we can coordinate our resources to better support Oxfordshire SMEs on their journey to net zero. We met again last week (20th May), kindly hosted by the Low Carbon Hub, for a morning of very productive discussions, filled with positive ideas and actionable steps to take away.

For more information, email us at: business@enterpriseoxfordshire.com

Other Resources available to businesses:

As part of Enterprise Oxfordshire's ongoing commitment to provide the best possible service to Oxfordshire's SMEs we always ensure that other services and grant opportunities which may be available to business within Oxfordshire are highlighted and signposted on our 'External Recourses' website page.

External Resources

Enterprise Oxfordshire Business Directory

Join our fast growing Oxfordshire Business Directory.
Enterprise Oxfordshire Business have developed a Business Directory platform for businesses to support each other and promote themselves.

Business Directory



Events

All our planned fully funded events can be accessed and booked here:

[View Events](#)

OxBOoSt Network – June

Tues, 3rd June 2025 16:00 - 17:00 BST - Online

[Book](#)



Oxfordshire Business Opportunities & Support Network

A network for all OxLEP clients to connect, collaborate and exchange ideas.

Date: Tuesday 3rd June

Time: 4:00pm - 5:00pm

Online event!



The Number 1 regular meet-up for Oxfordshire businesses who want to connect, collaborate and exchange ideas.

Enterprise Oxfordshire Business engages with thousands of business owners and leaders every year providing knowledge, advice and other business development support. But until now there hasn't been an easy way to help these businesses to network. Problem solved...

The OxBOoSt network is open to all Oxfordshire based businesses to join (and its free!). Each meeting will include 5-8 pre-arranged slots for businesses to share their story or pitch for collaboration and a forward look of business support from Enterprise Oxfordshire. And of course there will be plenty of time for networking.

Getting your business ready for growth

Wed, 11th June 2025 10:00 - 12:00 BST - Online

[Book](#)



Join us for...

**Getting your business
ready for growth**

Wednesday 11th June, 10:00am - 12:00pm

Online Workshop



Whether you're a sole trader, a solo-preneur, or leading a team of 15, this workshop is designed to help you take your business to the next level.

Join us as we explore the key foundations every growing business needs: from creating a clear and compelling vision to setting SMART goals that drive real results. You'll gain actionable insights into building the systems and processes that support scalable, sustainable growth—without sacrificing quality or control.

Discover how to design a business that can thrive without your constant involvement. Learn how to shape a high-performing team, strengthen your organizational structure, and master the art of recruitment and management to attract and retain top talent.

Events

All our planned fully funded events can be accessed and booked here:

[View Events](#)

Business Growth Peer Network **Thurs, 12th June 2025 12:00 - 2:00 BST - Onlin**

[Book](#)



As small-medium business owners it can be hard to deliver the day job whilst keeping an eye on the future of your business and adapting to change.

Peer Networks provide the time, space and skill sets to step back and move forwards on challenging issues. Working in a small group, for a focused period of time, you can make progress faster on things that matter to you in your business. You'll find that your fellow group members have been in your position and have valuable perspectives to share.

Making Your Business More Deaf Friendly **Mon 23rd June 2025 12:30 - 1:30 BST - Online**

[Book](#)



Did you know that 1 in 6 people in the UK are affected by hearing loss and that number is growing? If your business isn't confident in how to communicate inclusively, you could be missing out on valuable customers, team members, and connections.

Join us for this eye-opening and practical session with Suzi Sentance, founder of Oxford BSL.

Suzi first realised she had started to lose her hearing in 2014. She began to learn British Sign Language and has spent the past six years working as a Qualified Teacher of Deaf Children and Young People. Many times, Suzi has experienced frustration relating to her hearing loss when communicating with all kinds of people and knows she is not alone.

Takeaways:

- Practical communication tips you can apply immediately
- Awareness of common barriers faced by people with hearing loss
- A better understanding of the benefits of inclusive customer service
- Insight into how your business can stand out by being truly accessible

Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills

Celebrations commence as leading lights announced at annual apprenticeship awards

An array of the county's top apprentices, businesses, education providers and champions of apprenticeships came together on 22 May for this year's Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards – one of the standout annual business celebration events anywhere in the region.

The spectacular awards – now in its ninth year and organised by Enterprise Oxfordshire – saw 180 guests come together at the spectacular Long Library at Blenheim Palace to celebrate all things apprenticeships.

This year, the event saw winners announced from 12 categories, all of which it is hoped will act as a major inspiration to businesses, encouraging them to explore what an apprenticeship programme could bring to their respective companies.

The overall Oxfordshire Apprentice of the Year was chosen from the winners of the five apprentice award categories by the headline sponsor, The Hill Group. This year, the accolade went to Imani D'Amore, Apprentice Youth Support Worker at Oxfordshire County Council, who also won the Advanced Apprentice of the Year and Special Recognition Award.

Read the full list of winners and catch up on all the action from the celebration evening on social media via #OAAwards2025.

[Learn More](#)



Apprenticeship Levy Pledge Initiative

Enterprise Oxfordshire are excited to announce the extension of our Social Contract Programme to September 2025 – including our popular Apprenticeship Levy Pledge Initiative.

The initiative – which has seen just under £5m in pledges to date – supports apprenticeship levy-paying businesses within the county to commit their unused funds to support other Oxfordshire businesses to take on apprentices. To date, just under £4m of these funds have been optimised to facilitate new apprenticeship starts within the county.

Employers in the county with an annual pay bill of £3m+ pay 0.5% of this as an apprenticeship levy and can pledge up to 50% of their levy funds annually. Levy can be pledged to Oxfordshire based small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs and other levy paying business who have fully utilised their funds), charities and social enterprises to help fund apprenticeship training and assessment.

The programme's Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Advisors offer support and guidance, which includes helping employers to unlock their apprenticeship levy and enabling smaller organisations to access unused levy in order to start or develop their apprenticeship schemes. This support is already pre-funded so is at no cost to the employer.

Enterprise Oxfordshire are urging apprenticeship levy-paying businesses, both national and within the county to pledge their unused levy, following the extension to the scheme – and reminding those that have already pledged that it is possible to re-pledge further funds.

SMEs in the county that are interested in taking on an apprentice or using apprenticeships to upskill their existing teams or fill skills gaps are also urged to engage with the programme, as they may be eligible to receive available transferred funds.

The Social Contract programme is a £1.7million programme of activity funded by the government's Contain Outbreak Management Fund via Oxfordshire County Council and led by Enterprise Oxfordshire. Originally funded until the end of March this year, the programme sees an extension, following its success to date and the commitment to furthering the outcomes already achieved by the key initiatives in place.

Helen Brind – Head of Business and Skills at Enterprise Oxfordshire, said: "We are thrilled to announce the extension to such an important initiative – and also highlight that now is most definitely the time for businesses to engage and pledge their unused levy – before it's too late.

"The initiative averages around £1.25m going back into the Oxfordshire economy each year – which showcases how beneficial programmes such as the Social Contract are in changing individual lives but also contributing to the wider benefit of whole geographies.

"Apprenticeships are a hugely powerful tool in widening the range of skills in an organisation, bringing in new ideas, or simply upskilling your existing team and retaining that talent – to receive this funding is also a no-brainer in terms of opportunity for smaller businesses within the county.

"We'd urge all businesses who may be eligible to get in touch with our Apprenticeship Advisors today."

For more information on the Apprenticeship Levy Pledge Initiative – and to find out if your business could be eligible to pledge or receive funds – contact our Skills and Employability Advisors at: skills@enterpriseoxfordshire.com.



Enterprise Oxfordshire OxGROW

Enterprise Oxfordshire urge those struggling to find employment – or change career – to access free virtual mentoring platform, 'OxGROW'

Enterprise Oxfordshire are calling for individuals within the county struggling to find employment or looking to change career direction, to sign up to their free online virtual mentoring program, 'OxGROW', and connect with local business experts.

The news comes as the age restriction to access the service is lowered to 16, to support as many people as possible who may be struggling to find, or enter, employment in the county.

The platform – produced in collaboration with virtual platform hosts, Connectr – provides free employment advice and support to individuals aged 16 and above, connecting them with professional mentors from different sectors in Oxfordshire.

Mentors provide text-based, online mentoring tailored to individual needs, offering insights into the local job market and working environments.

Through the platform, mentees can choose multiple mentors based on needs or engage in longer-term conversations with a single mentor, access learning modules on topics like resilience, confidence building and interview skills and receive support on CV enhancement at their own pace.

There are currently 23 mentors available to assist mentees through the initiative and the certificate for completing the learning modules on the platform is recognised by the Department for Work and Pensions' Jobcentre Plus in Oxfordshire.

Enterprise Oxfordshire OxGROW

OxGROW is funded by the Social Contract programme, a £1.7million programme of activity funded by the government's Contain Outbreak Management Fund via Oxfordshire County Council and led by Enterprise Oxfordshire.

Helen Brind – Head of Business and Skills at Enterprise Oxfordshire, said: "We're so pleased to announce that we've lowered the age restriction on OxGROW to include individuals from age 16.

"It's essential we recognise the challenges of entering and finding employment at any age, as well changing the course of what that career looks like – which is why the initiative also has no upper age limit.

"Our experienced and knowledgeable business experts can offer a wealth of expertise to meet the mentees needs, prepare them for interview, work with them on CVs and job applications, and ultimately give an insight into what life might look like in that career.

"Given the change in lower age limit, we'd now also urge local education providers, parents or anyone supporting an individual of over 16, to pass on details of OxGROW – it's free career mentoring, which doesn't come around all that often."

Kathryn Jackson – a Personal Development Coach who owns her own business in Oxfordshire – is a mentor for the programme and says of her mentoring approach: "I'll be supportive, I'll share what's in my career toolbox with you and I hope that builds confidence to take the first steps towards your goals.

"Sometimes we all just need that cheerleader that supports us and nudges us to take action and that might be exactly what you find in an OxGROW mentor."

[Learn More](#)

Expression of Interest to Exhibit at 2025 Aspirations Day on 13th October 2025

Oxfordshire Careers Hub is running their annual careers event for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The event is now held annually in October, it is attended by the majority of the special schools in Oxfordshire, with over 200 students attending last year.

Events like this are key to supporting this group of students to become successful adults. Students with SEND are more likely than their peers to become NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) at Post-16 and Post-18. There has been some interesting research around the positive impact of work on people's quality of life and mortality. The statistics for adults with SEND, who are in employment, are poor - 65% of people in the UK with learning disabilities want to work, yet only 4.8% are actually employed. The Aspirations Day gives these students a better idea about the progression opportunities for them in Oxfordshire, it helps them and their support networks to make decisions around their next steps after school/college. The students attending have a range of abilities and skills, many will not obtain GCSEs, and so we are looking for a variety of organisations who can offer opportunities, information and support to them.

We still need to confirm the date and timings for the day but students will arrive from 8/8:30am and the event will finish at 2/2:30pm. Students will be around Year 10 (14-15 years old) and up but will all have different abilities. Many of the students will not receive any formal qualifications, i.e. GCSEs, so please bear this in mind. Together with the schools, we will be pulling together some information to help prepare and support exhibitors to have the most meaningful interactions with the students. We will share that, and additional logistical information, when we can.

If you have any questions, please email
Eleanor.Gordon-Martin@Oxfordshire.gov.uk.

Complete Expression of Interest



Oxfordshire Net Zero Business Support

Do you know your business emissions?

Small and medium sized companies (SMEs) make up 90% of global business and are the foundation of the world's value chains. While the emissions from any single SME may be small, collectively SMEs contribute a sizeable amount to the global carbon footprint.

It is increasingly important, for many reasons, for all businesses, regardless of sector and size, to understand their emissions:

- **Stay compliant** – many customers now require SMEs to disclose their carbon emissions in order to qualify for contracts. Particularly in the public sector, however this expectation is likely to spread. By measuring your emissions, you are helping ensure your business stays competitive and does not miss out.
- **Business brand** – 77% of consumers say it's at least moderately important that brands are sustainable and environmentally responsible. By understanding your emissions, you can enhance your brand's value for both the environment and society.
- **Reduce risk** – understanding your emissions can help you lower regulatory risks, attract environmentally-conscious investors, improve competitiveness, and cut costs through increased efficiency.
- **Taking action** – as the saying goes, 'you can't manage what you don't measure'. By measuring your emissions, you can identify areas for improvement and boost efficiency.
- **Show your climate leadership** – and be more attractive as an employer. 2 in 3 employees are more likely to work for a company with strong environmental policies.

Oxfordshire Net Zero Business Support

Measuring and understanding your emissions is a great first step to help your business start taking meaningful action.

- Measure your emissions for free with the UK SME Climate Hub

[Learn More](#)

- Find a wealth of really useful free tools and resources designed to help you with reducing your emissions

[Learn More](#)

- Find net zero support for your business within Oxfordshire:
<https://oxlepbusiness.co.uk/net-zero/>

[Learn More](#)



Oxfordshire Business Support

As part of our ongoing commitment to provide the best possible service to Oxfordshire's SME's we always ensure that other services and opportunities which may be available to business within Oxfordshire are highlighted and signposted.

Business & IP Centre Oxfordshire

At the Oxford Westgate Library

Supporting Oxfordshire residents to start, protect and grow their own business.

[Learn More](#)



OSEP

OSEP provides support, empowerment, and advocacy for local social enterprises, enterprising charities, and purposeful businesses in Oxfordshire. Email: hello@osep.org.uk

[Learn More](#)



District Council Support for Businesses

[Cherwell District Council](#)

[Oxford City Council](#)

[South Oxfordshire District Council](#)

[Vale of White Horse District Council](#)

[West Oxfordshire District Council](#)

Non Enterprise Oxfordshire News/Events

West Oxfordshire District Council and Cotswold Tourism will soon be launching three new grant schemes to support businesses in West Oxfordshire:

- Shop Front Improvement Grants – Up to £1,000 for external enhancements such as signage, seating, and accessibility improvements.
- Sustainable Tourism Grants – Capital funding from £1,000 to £10,000 for eco-friendly improvements.
- Rural Enterprise Growth Grants – Up to £20,000 to help rural and agricultural businesses diversify, grow, and innovate.

Please note: match funding will be required for all three schemes.

Full details will be released soon — don't miss out! Sign up to their newsletter to be the first to hear when applications open:

[Sign Up](#)

Oxfordshire Great Big Green Lunch 9th-15th June

Whether you're a business, institution, office team or community group, the idea is simple: pledge to enjoy at least one sustainable lunch during the week. Ideas include a virtual plant-based lunch, or have some fun with your team, with a zero-waste lunch challenge, lunch swaps, potlucks or sharing recipes.

You will receive a free downloadable toolkit with recipe ideas, tips, and posters, emails and social media assets for you to use.

The Great Big Green Lunch is a simple but impactful challenge and a great opportunity for your business to show your commitment to sustainability, build team spirit, and be part of a growing local movement... helping reduce our environmental impact, one bite at a time.

This year they are aiming for the biggest impact yet – will your organisation be a part of it?

[Learn More](#)

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[Learn More](#)

Better Points Oxfordshire

Want to earn rewards and win prizes for getting around Oxfordshire on foot, by bike or by public transport?

The reward points users of the app earn from traveling sustainably can be redeemed at participating businesses for goods and services. We call these businesses 'Reward Partners'.

[Learn More](#)

The Benefits of Coworking for Freelancers and Solopreneurs - by Point of Difference Workspace Ltd.

Perch Coworking, based in the heart of Bicester (near Sainsbury's), offers a professional, flexible workspace designed for freelancers and solopreneurs who need more than a coffee shop corner.

- Connect with like-minded people
- Coworking surrounds you with fellow creatives, freelancers, and entrepreneurs. It's networking without the awkwardness, and support without the pressure.
- All the perks, none of the overheads
- Fast internet, meeting rooms, printers, and good coffee –
- our coworking space comes with all the tools you need,
- without the cost and hassle of running your own office.
- Find better balance
- A dedicated workspace creates structure, helping you switch off at the end of the day and avoid burnout.

If you're ready to elevate your workday, pop in for a free 2-hour trial, grab a coffee, and experience Perch Coworking for yourselves.

Contact e: hello@pointofdifference.co.uk t: 01869 690126

[Learn More](#)



Ashes to Action: Climate Solutions Conference 2025: 10th June, Oxford Museum of Natural History

Not long to go! Join zero-carbon business network Oxfordshire Greentech on 10th June to learn more about the role that Oxfordshire is playing in tackling humanity's greatest challenge, and to be part of the conversation on how we can accelerate and amplify climate solutions together.

The conference will showcase the cutting-edge climate technology innovation coming out of the Oxfordshire ecosystem and highlight the key sustainability initiatives happening across the region, with internationally renowned speakers and thought leaders across the day's programme.

We are excited to be attending as Enterprise Oxfordshire, and look forward to meeting and catching up with businesses and organisations focused on low carbon solutions, and to inspiring discussions with others with a shared passion for taking action.

As a conference supporter, we are delighted to share with you a special discount code for 20% off the ticket, using code: Ecosystem20 at the checkout.

[Learn More](#)

THE HEAT: A Counter-intuitive Climate-Tech Festival: 19th September, Harwell Science & Innovation Campus

THE HEAT is a day-long festival designed to spark real conversations, inspire new ideas, and build authentic connections among people working on the most urgent challenges in climate and technology. Expect a mix of 600+ founders, investors, scientists, artists, media and builders, from across the globe.

As well as speakers, THE HEAT will feature a rich day of activities, including inspiring stories, expert workshops, product demonstrations, future-food tastings, musical performances, art installations, a participant-led "unconference", tours of the Harwell Science Campus, a startup pitch competition, speed networking, an evening party... and much more!

Use the discount code ENTO15 for 15% off the ticket price. Register by 5th June for early-adopter prices.

[Learn More](#)

Cyber Security Workshop

We have just 2 weeks to go until our first Cyber Security Workshop, delivered in partnership with Banbury Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise Oxfordshire, and funded by Thames Valley Police.

With cyber threats becoming increasingly sophisticated, these interactive workshops are designed to equip business leaders and professionals with the knowledge and tools to protect their data, operations, and reputation.

Key Topics Include:

- Managing and responding to a data breach
- Spotting malware and fraudulent websites
- Password strength and checking for dark web exposure
- Mobile security, including encryption, biometrics, and data handling

The sessions will be led by respected industry experts:

John Staley, Director, IT Teacher Ltd

Josh Read, Cyber Security Operations Manager, Celerity

First Workshop Details:

Date: Tuesday 10th June 2025

Time: 10:00am – 12:30pm

Location: Bloxham Mill, Banbury

Bonus: Optional personal device security review available for in-person attendees.

We will also be launching a series of interactive virtual workshops for those who prefer to attend remotely – dates to be announced soon.

We encourage you to share this opportunity with colleagues, clients, or business partners who could benefit.

Thank you for your continued support and if you have any questions do get in touch.

[Learn More](#)

Unlock Fresh Talent with B-Enterprising!

Looking for a flexible way to tackle short-term projects and inject new ideas into your business? Discover B-Enterprising, a micro-internship scheme run by Buckingham University's Careers and Employability Service, who connect you with highly motivated students ready to bring fresh perspectives to your team, while gaining valuable work experience. Projects are part-time and flexible, designed to fit seamlessly with student studies. Learn how your business can benefit and get involved today!

[Learn More](#)

Could your
business benefit
from micro-
internships?



THE UNIVERSITY OF
BUCKINGHAM



The Oxford Magazine: What's on in Oxfordshire

[Learn More](#)

Oxfordshire County Council News

[Learn More](#)

Experience Oxfordshire: What's on

[Learn More](#)

**If you have anything you would like sharing in future editions please
email: business@enterpriseoxfordshire.com**