

Growth Hub Newsletter

February 2026

Support for your business

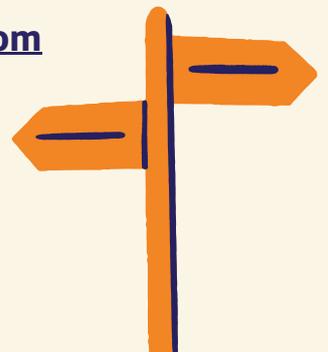
We provide fully funded support for every stage of business, from start-up to growth. This includes one to one support with one of our expert advisors, facilitated workshops and webinars, peer groups and much more.

Get started...

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

[Business Support Tool](#)

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



New business support programme live launch event

Enterprise Oxfordshire are excited to announce that the Helping High Streets business support programme targeting high streets officially launched 11th December and is now fully underway. Beginning 4th February, a series of free online webinars will offer practical guidance designed to help you strengthen your business and contribute to future vibrancy of your local high street.

This government backed programme, delivered by Enterprise Oxfordshire, supports thousands of SMEs and entrepreneurs across Oxfordshire's retail areas, using a focused 'place-based' approach. Each district will receive tailored support for one key area:

- **Vale of White Horse: Faringdon**
- **South Oxfordshire: Watlington**
- **Oxford City: Cowley Road**
- **West Oxfordshire: Carterton**
- **Cherwell: Kidlington**

Alongside in person support, online resources are available to eligible high street businesses across the county.

Our lively launch event, Successful High Streets – Setting The Ambition, will be hosted online 2-3pm Wednesday 4th February.

This interactive session is designed to help local high street businesses set clear, achievable goals and tap into fully funded expert support.

During the event you'll hear how our spotlight sessions, one-to-one guidance and local promotional opportunities can help increase visibility, strengthen performance and build resilience on your high street.

What you will gain:

- Time to reflect on your business and define realistic, ambitions that move the dial on sales, margins, and footfall.
- An introduction to expert-led sessions covering branding, customer experience, digital marketing, innovation, and collaboration.
- Insight into how featuring in trails, events, and campaigns could boost your profile with local customers and visitors.

[**Event Registration**](#)

To find out more and to register an interest in the programme, head to our website.

[**Visit our website**](#)



Social Impact Business Support Programme

The Social Impact Business Support Programme is a new initiative designed to help co-operatives, mutuals, social enterprises and other organisations using alternative business models to start, scale and thrive. Participants will benefit from one-to-one advisory support, workshops (online and in person) and peer networking events with key stakeholders.

The programme is due to run until the end of **March 2026**.

Led by Enterprise Oxfordshire Business and delivered by OSEP CIC (the Oxfordshire Social Enterprise Partnership) – itself a social enterprise – the programme extends successful support already operating across Oxford City, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts.

[Register an interest in the programme](#)

Enterprise Oxfordshire Business Directory

Our fast-growing Business Directory is the perfect place for you to showcase your business, connect with other local enterprises, and take advantage of the numerous opportunities that our network offers. Whether you're a small startup or an established company, listing your business in our directory can significantly enhance your visibility and reach.

The process is simple and straightforward, and our team is here to assist you every step of the way.

[List your business](#)

Oxfordshire Network Groups

Are you looking to make valuable connections and boost your business success? We have some exciting news for you! There are numerous networking groups and events happening right here in Oxfordshire that can help you expand your professional network and open new doors for your business.

The Oxfordshire Network Groups directory is a great resource for discovering the best ways to find networking groups and events near you. Whether you're looking to connect with like-minded professionals, share ideas, or simply grow your business, this is the perfect place to start.

[Find out more about these fantastic opportunities](#)

Other Resources Available to Businesses

As part of Enterprise Oxfordshire's unwavering commitment to deliver the best possible service to Oxfordshire's SMEs, we continuously strive to ensure that other services and grant opportunities available to businesses within Oxfordshire are highlighted and signposted on our 'External Resources' website page.

Check out our 'External Resources' page and keep updated with any new opportunities that could benefit your business.

[Find out more](#)

Enterprise Oxfordshire Business Events

Find out more about upcoming Enterprise Oxfordshire Business events, workshops and webinars designed to help your business.

[View events](#)



OxBOoSt
Oxfordshire Business Opportunities & Support Network
A network for all Enterprise Oxfordshire clients to connect, collaborate and exchange ideas.
Date: Tuesday 3rd February
Time: 4:00pm - 5:00pm
Online event

Join Today!



ENTERPRISE
OXFORDSHIRE
Business

The '**Oxfordshire Business Opportunities & Support network**' for all Enterprise Oxfordshire Business clients & anyone who wants to learn more.

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

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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 will meet via zoom on Tuesday 3rd February from 4:00pm to 5:00pm and 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.

[Register Here](#)



Successful High Streets – Setting The Ambition

Set clear, practical ambitions for the next three months and tap into fully funded expert support.

This webinar is being delivered online for businesses trading on the High Street.

Feb 4 from 2pm to 3pm GMT Online Event

A high-energy launch event designed to help local businesses set clear, actionable goals and access fully funded expert support. Backed by the UK Government, this session offers a unique opportunity to tackle challenges and shape the future of your high street alongside mission-driven experts Ant Parsons (ALP Synergy Ltd) and veteran brand strategist Judy Andrews (Tickety Boo Creative). Come ready to swap ideas and leave with a 90-day ambition plan and the professional tools needed to thrive.

[Register Here](#)

Join us for...

Building Your Community and Reputation on LinkedIn

Thursday 5th February

12:30pm - 1:30pm

Online Webinar



Building Your Community and Reputation on LinkedIn

Is your LinkedIn profile a static, digital business card, or is it your most powerful tool for driving revenue and opportunity?

Feb 5 from 12:30pm to 1:30pm GMT Online Event

The art of sales has fundamentally changed. This webinar will show you how to move beyond broadcasting your services and start building a powerful ecosystem that naturally leads to inbound leads, valuable partnerships, and a predictable pipeline.

[Register Here](#)



Brand As The Magnet - Spotlight Session

How clarity of your brand gives confidence in you and your customers.

Feb 10 from 11am to 12pm GMT- Online event

This webinar is being delivered online for businesses trading on the High Street.

[Register Here](#)



Collab Lab Online: Practical Collaboration for High Street Businesses

This online Collab Lab is designed to make collaboration simple, practical, & worthwhile, even if you're starting from scratch.

Feb 11 from 9:30am to 11am GMT- Online Event

This webinar is being delivered online for businesses trading on the High Street.

[Register Here](#)



Pathways to Start Programme

Thinking about starting your own business, or taking your first steps but not sure where to begin?

Feb 12 from 12pm to 2pm GMT- Online Event

[Register Here](#)



Enterprise Oxfordshire Women in Business Gathering

Join us at this 'gathering' of like-minded business women!

*Feb 24 from 9:30am to 12pm GMT
The Corn Exchange, Witney, OX28 6AB*

Are you a female founder, leader, manager, entrepreneur of an SME in Oxfordshire?

Our Women in Business Gatherings provides the opportunity for us to celebrate our amazing local female talent, wonderful business relationships forged to date, and the evident appetite for female empowerment across the region.

Our guest speaker is Kate Drewett from Fat Squirrel Outdoor Co Ltd. Kate made the scary decision to leave her job in January 2020. Kate now runs Fat Squirrel Outdoor. Kate's goal is to make the outdoors fun and accessible to more people. To bring people together - to help them reconnect with colleagues they now only see on a screen, with family and friends in the beautiful outdoors.

[Register Here](#)

Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills

For more information on Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills please visit:
enterpriseoxfordshireskills.com

Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards 2026

[Find out more](#)

The Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards 2026 are open for entries and nominations until 23:59 on the evening of Monday 23 February. There something for everyone - with 10 award categories to mark the 10th year of the awards, there are categories for apprentices, former apprentices, employers, training providers and individuals who champion apprenticeships and other vocational pathways.

Do you employ an apprentice? Why not nominate them for one of the apprentice awards and enter yourself as an employer!

Do you know an apprentice or a business that employs apprentices? Please help us spread the word by letting them know that the awards are open!

The categories and sponsors are as follows:

- Intermediate (Level 2) Apprentice of the Year Award (Abbott Diabetes Care)
- Advanced (Level 3) Apprentice of the Year Award (NielsenIQ)
- Higher/Degree Apprentice (Level 4+) of the Year Award (Grundon)
- Special Recognition Award (M Group Highways)
- Rising Star Award (Webexpenses)
- Shining Star Award (Hill)
- Skills Champion Award (The Engineering Trust)
- Training Provider Individual Award (Blenheim & Pye Homes)
- Apprenticeship Employer of the Year Award (<250 employees) (Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust)
- Apprenticeship Employer of the Year Award (250+ employees) (Assure UK)

Winners will be announced at a special celebration evening, which will take place on Thursday 21 May at the recently-opened Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities – the University of Oxford’s new world-class centre for the arts and humanities.



OXFORDSHIRE
APPRENTICESHIP
Awards 2026
10TH ANNIVERSARY

Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards 2026

Now open for entries and nominations...

With categories for apprentices, employers, training providers and skills champions, there's something for everyone!

enterpriseoxfordshireskills.com/oaawards

#OAAwards2026

 ENTERPRISE
OXFORDSHIRE
Skills

Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills

For more information on Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills please visit:
enterpriseoxfordshireskills.com

Apprenticeship awareness broadcasts for parents and carers

Are you a parent or carer who would like to know more about apprenticeships to help you support your young person with deciding what to do when they leave school or college?

There are so many options for what young people can do when they leave school or college at age 16 or 18 and it's important that all young people learn about all the pathways available to them so that they can decide on their best next step.

To help you explore the options, Oxfordshire Careers Hub is teaming up with the Career Friendly programme to hold two apprenticeship awareness broadcasts for parents and carers during National Apprenticeship Week (young people are welcome to attend too!).

- Tune in on 11 February from 18:00 – 19:00 hear about post 16 options
- Tune in on 12 February from 18:00 – 19:00 to hear about post 18 options

You will hear an overview of apprenticeships from Leah Bryan, Apprenticeships and Talent Specialist at Intake Talent and have the opportunity to ask any questions via a live chat with the speakers. The post 16 broadcast will focus more on apprenticeships that are suitable for young people after GCSEs / Level 2 qualifications and the post 18 broadcast will also look at apprenticeships as an alternative to university for young people who will leave school or college with A Levels or another Level 3 qualification.

In the post 16 options broadcast, you will hear the employer perspective from Megan Carter from Blenheim Palace & Pye Homes, the training provider perspective from Lisa Marie Perkins from ACE Training and the apprentice perspective from Isabel Faulkner from Darcica Logistics Limited and Luke Spink from Williams Racing.

In the post 18 options broadcast, you will hear the employer perspective from Eleanor Jennings from the University of Oxford, the training provider perspective from Rob Green from CSR Training and the apprentice perspective from Thomas Taylor from NielsenIQ.



**Apprenticeships
Broadcasts for
Parents and Carers**

NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK 2026

Oxfordshire Careers Hub and the Career Friendly programme are holding two apprenticeship awareness broadcasts for parents and carers during National Apprenticeship Week to help you explore the options for your young person when they leave school or college at age 16 or 18.

 Post 16 options February 11, 2026 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	 Post 18 options February 12, 2026 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
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 **ENTERPRISE
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Skills

**Oxfordshire
CAREERS HUB**

**THE CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE
COMPANY**

 **CFP**



Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills

For more information on Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills please visit:
enterpriseoxfordshireskills.com

Apprenticeships awareness broadcasts for parents and carers

To view the broadcasts, you will need to register for an account with Career Friendly and you will then be able to view them via the same link. This will also enable you to make contact with local employers and educators via the platform.

Important: Please register for an account as soon as you can, as your account will need to be approved by the Career Friendly programme team in advance, which takes a few days. This will not be able to be done the same day as the broadcast.

[Find out more](#)

Connect your business with the next generation

Interested in connecting with local schools and colleges and promoting your business to the next generation and their parents/carers? You can also register as a business on Career Friendly to make those vital connections.

Find out more in this video:

[Watch now](#)



Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills

For more information on Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills please visit:
enterpriseoxfordshireskills.com

National Apprenticeship Week 2026 in Oxfordshire

National Apprenticeship Week takes place every year with the aim of highlighting the exceptional work being done by employers and apprentices across the country.

The 19th annual week-long celebration of apprenticeships will take place from 9 to 15 February 2026, with the theme 'Skills for Life'; reflecting on how apprenticeships can help individuals to develop the skills and knowledge required for a rewarding career and businesses to develop a talented workforce that is equipped with future-ready skills.

We have put together a list of events and initiatives happening across Oxfordshire during National Apprenticeship Week 2026. If you know of something we haven't included, please let us know by emailing skills@enterpriseoxfordshire.com and we will add it.

[Find out more](#)

**NATIONAL
APPRENTICESHIP
WEEK #NAW2026**

Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills

For more information on Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills please visit:
enterpriseoxfordshireskills.com

Careers Fest 2026 – session for parents and carers

Are you a parent or carer of a young person in Year 9 or above? Like to know more about their options for when they leave school or college to help you support them with taking their best next step?

Oxfordshire Careers Hub is holding a twilight session for parents and carers at Careers Fest on **Wednesday 18 March from 16:00 – 19:00 at The Kassam Conference & Events Centre in Oxford.**

This year, Careers Fest will welcome more than 75 exhibitors offering information, advice and guidance on future pathways and careers from a varied range of sectors. This is a fantastic opportunity to meet employers, further education colleges, universities and training providers and find out about all the options they have to offer.

Visiting Careers Fest with your young person is a great way to get those careers conversations started and help you feel equipped with the right information to support them with deciding on their next step.

[Learn More](#)

[Book Your Place](#)

Spend time with your young person at Careers Fest

Attending Careers Fest together is a great opportunity to invest in your young person's future, where they can explore diverse career paths, interact with professionals, and gain a clearer understanding of their aspirations!



The Kassam Conference & Events Centre
Wed, 18 Mar 2026
16:00 - 19:00 GMT



Oxfordshire Net Zero Business Support

SMEs across Oxfordshire play a vital role in helping the county reach net zero emissions by 2050. To make this journey easier, Enterprise Oxfordshire have created a one stop resource hub offering guidance, tools and funding opportunities – no matter your sector or where you are on your sustainability journey.

We believe that with the right support and resources, every business can make a meaningful contribution to a greener future. Let's work together to achieve net zero and make Oxfordshire a leader in sustainability.

[Find Out More](#)

Other Net Zero Support

Low Carbon Hub Pint & Planet: Networking for Good

Low Carbon Hub is hosting a series of networking events designed to bring together local organisations to learn more about the Green Fund and explore local challenges and opportunities. Sustainability is no longer just about being green. It can mean fewer costs and more business for your organisation, especially when the local community is involved. At these events, you'll hear how you can support your business community plus you can engage with local people from local community groups, Freeland Energy Group and Go Green Hanborough.

The next event, Pint and Planet: Networking for Good, brought to you by the Community Action Plan for Net Zero (CAPZero), will take place Wednesday 25th February at the The Oxfordshire Yeoman.

[Find Out More](#)

Oxfordshire Business Support

Perch Coworking

As we ease back into work and set intentions for 2026, it's a great time to rethink how and where we work. Coworking offers flexibility, structure and a professional environment without long-term commitments, making it ideal for freelancers, small teams and growing businesses. At Perch Coworking in central Bicester, you can switch between workspaces and access meeting rooms in Banbury and Bicester, perfect for fresh ideas, productive sessions and creative conversations.

As you plan for the year ahead, consider coworking as part of a smarter way to work - flexible, connected and productive.

Get in touch hello@pointofdifference.co.uk 01869 690126 or just pop in if you're passing through Bicester (we're underneath the Cherwell Library) and meet the team!

MADESMARTER

The Department for Business and Trade have confirmed funding of the Made Smarter South East programme for 2026-2027.

The UK is set to be the global leader in the creation, adoption & exportation of advanced digital technologies. Now's the time for manufacturing to evolve and with emerging technologies the possibilities are endless.

This not-so-distant future will boost our economy and create new jobs. Want to be part of it? We can help you to leverage the power of these tools. The manufacturers of tomorrow use technology to streamline their processes. They are faster, more responsive, and more efficient. Ultimately, they make better products for less. Made Smarter helps you secure this competitive edge. Find out how Made Smarter developed.

[Learn More](#)

Consultation on business support for co-operatives

The Department for Business has launched a consultation on how the Government can continue to support co-operative and non-financial mutual businesses to start up and grow. The consultation will cover the start-up process, how co-operatives and non-financial mutuals grow, and experiences of co-operatives and non-financial mutuals in accessing business support. This call for evidence closes at 11:55pm on 18 February 2026.

[Learn More](#)

Consultation on business rates and investment

HM Treasury has launched a consultation on reforms to the business rates system. The consultation will examine how the business rates system influences business investment decisions and how reforms could help better support investment and economic growth. This call for evidence closes at 11:55pm on 18 February 2026.

[Learn More](#)

Oxford Living Wage

Running a business in Oxford means facing unique challenges: high living costs, competitive recruitment and the need to keep great people. For us, paying the Oxford Living Wage was an easy decision. It's about valuing our team and helping build a fairer, stronger community.

Since becoming accredited, we've seen the benefits firsthand. Our staff are happier, they stay longer and our customers enjoy a better experience. Fair pay isn't just the right thing to do – it's good for business.

This Oxford Living Wage Week, we're celebrating the many employers across the city who invest in their people by paying the Oxford Living Wage. It's more than a commitment; it's a statement that your team matters, and that Oxford thrives when everyone is valued.

Becoming accredited is simple and free. Accreditation shows your commitment and connects you with like-minded employers shaping a fairer Oxford.

Want to join the movement?

[Learn More](#)

Oxfordshire Business Support

As part of our ongoing commitment to provide the best possible service to Oxfordshire's SMEs, we always ensure that other services and opportunities which may be available to business within the county 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 Business News/Events:

Corporate Training with Oxford Playhouse – 2026 Dates Now Open

[More Info](#)

To find out more or to discuss tailored options for your organisation, please contact Mollie in the Development Team at mollie.dibb@oxfordplayhouse.com

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