

Growth Hub Newsletter

April 2026

Support for your business

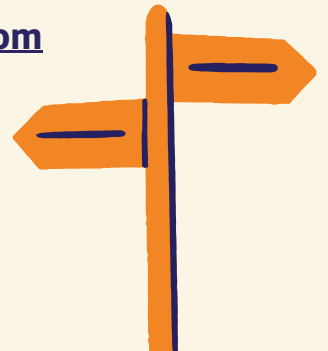
We provide fully funded support for every stage of business, from start-up to growth. This includes one to one support with one of our expert advisors, facilitated workshops and webinars, peer groups and much more.

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**



Marketplace and Celebration 2026 – Now Open!

Ready to shine? Marketplace and Celebration 2026 is officially OPEN – and it's FREE to enter!

Following our launch on 17 March, the Marketplace & Celebration 2026 is open and ready for you. Entry is completely free, so whether you want to shout about your own business, nominate a brilliant business you admire, or grab a spot in our buzzing marketplace, now's the time. Get involved, get inspired, and be part of the celebration

Marketplace and Celebration 2026 is a dedicated event to showcase the impact, growth, and innovation of businesses. We know that our local SMEs are doing incredible things. But we also know you're often too busy doing the work to talk about how great it is.

Why enter the MAC26 Awards?

- It's Free!: Get an industry seal of approval at zero cost.
- Team Recognition: Celebrate the successes for your business
- Exposure: Reach new customers across Oxfordshire.
- Make Connections: Meet 100+ business leaders and innovators all in one place!

Event Supporters

- Lick Me I'm Delicious
- After Cloud/Dylogic
- 13th Theatre Company

A Big Thank You to Our Award Category Sponsors

- Socially Responsible Business of the Year sponsored by Tap Social
- Innovation in Customer Experience of the Year sponsored by Stephen Spencer + Associates
- Start-up of the Year sponsored by Cypher
- Business Leader of the Year sponsored by Institute of Directors
- Environmentally Sustainable Business of the Year sponsored by Velocity Cycle Couriers
- Growth Business of the Year sponsored by Olamalu

If you'd like to learn more about how you can support our event, please feel free to get in touch. We'd love to hear from you! Email: business@enterpriseoxfordshire.com

[Event Registration](#)

**Save the Date: Wednesday 4th
November 2026**

Our major celebration of Oxfordshire businesses returns to Oxford Town Hall!
MAC26 will once again be the ultimate platform for recognition, networking, and inspiration - shining a spotlight on the remarkable achievements of SMEs, innovators, and business leaders who have engaged with Enterprise Oxfordshire since April 2022.



Oxfordshire High Street Summit

Don't miss out! Join Oxfordshire high street businesses on Thursday 16 April at Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot, for a day of shared learning, fresh ideas, and meaningful connections.

The Oxfordshire High Street Summit offers an interactive, collaborative experience - no lectures, just guided conversations, inspiring stories, and practical discussions with peers facing similar challenges.

You'll leave feeling refreshed, better connected, and equipped with new ideas to strengthen your business and shape the future of your local high street.



Oxfordshire High Street Summit 2026

Thursday 16th April

10:00am - 2:30pm

Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot,
OX11 7NE

Event Registration

To find out more and to register an interest in the programme, head to the [Enterprise Oxfordshire Business website](#).



Inspiration & Connection: Highlights from International Women's Day

On Friday, 6th March, the energy at our International Women's Day celebration was nothing short of electric. Hosted in partnership with **Oxfordshire Women in Business** and the **Athena Network**, we brought together over 80 incredible women from across the county to celebrate, connect, and share our stories.

The morning was a powerful reminder of the strength within Oxfordshire's entrepreneurial community. We were privileged to hear the truly inspirational stories of **Alice Chilver from WHEN** and **Lucy B from Sustainably Styled**, whose insights into leadership and resilience left the room buzzing with new ideas.

What You Said About the Event...

The feedback from the morning has been wonderful, and it's clear that the spirit of collaboration is alive and well:

"Thank you so much for a great morning. It was so great to be surrounded by such super women. Just brilliant."

"A wonderful morning celebrating women in leadership across Oxfordshire. I had the best morning amongst wonderful, inspiring women."

"Thank you Enterprise Oxfordshire for organising such a wonderful event. I had the best morning amongst wonderful inspiring women of Oxfordshire"

"So many awesome ladies with fabulous businesses. Can't wait for the next one!"

Relive the Morning: The Official Gallery

Whether you were there and want to find yourself in the crowd, or you missed out and want to see what the morning was all about, we are delighted to share the official event gallery. Thank you to Fisher Studios for the photos.

Looking Ahead: Join Us in Banbury

If you couldn't make it this time, or if the Friday event has left you inspired to connect with more like-minded leaders, we would love to see you at our next gathering.

Our next Free Women in Business event is taking place at Banbury Cricket Ground on 22nd April. It's a fantastic opportunity to keep the conversation going in a relaxed, supportive environment.

Thank you to everyone who made our International Women's Day celebration such a resounding success. We are already looking forward to seeing you at the next one!



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](#)



ENTERPRISE
OXFORDSHIRE
Business

Funded by
UK Government

**Oxfordshire High Street
Summit 2026**

Thursday 16th April
10:00am - 2:30pm

Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot,
OX11 7NE

Oxfordshire High Street Summit 2026

Cornerstone Arts Centre, 25 Station Road,
Didcot OX11 7NE

Thursday, Apr 16, 2026 from 10 am to 2:30 pm

Bringing Oxfordshire's High Street businesses together to share, learn from one another and collaborate. High Streets are stronger together!


The Oxfordshire High Street Summit is designed to bring business owners together in one room to share knowledge, learn from one another, and explore what it really takes to build thriving, resilient high street businesses in changing times.


[Register Here](#)




Join us for...

Routes to Market & Building Your Action Plan

 Friday 17th April

 10:00am - 12:00pm

 Online

Routes to Market & Building Your Action Plan

Identifying a new market is just the start. The real challenge is choosing the right route to enter it, and managing risks along the way. Should you go direct? Partner with others? Use distributors? And how do you build credibility fast?

Friday, Apr 17, 2026 from 10 am to 12 pm Online

[Register Here](#)

OxBOoSt

Oxfordshire Business Opportunities & Support Network

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

Date: Tuesday 21st April

Time: 4:00pm - 5:00pm

Online event



OxBOoSt – April

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.

Tuesday, Apr 21, 2026 from 4 pm to 5 pm Online event

[Register Here](#)

Limited
Spaces!

Women in Business Gathering

The Pavilion, Banbury Cricket Club OX15 4BN
Wednesday 22nd April, 9.30am-12pm



Enterprise Oxfordshire Women in Business Gathering

Are you a female founder, leader, manager, entrepreneur of an SME in Oxfordshire? Join us at this 'gathering' of like-minded business women.

Wednesday, Apr 22, 2026 from 9:30 am to 12 pm

[Register Here](#)

OxTalks Series 4: The Female Founders Series

Oxfordshire is a global beacon for innovation, powered by a diverse community of entrepreneurs. This month, we are thrilled to spotlight OxTalks Series 4: The Female Founders Series. Hosted by Howard Bentham, this series goes beyond glossy success stories to explore the grit and strategic brilliance required to build a business from the ground up.



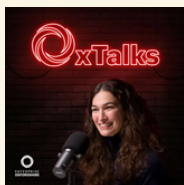
Episode 1: Alternative Education Provision: Building up Young People and Supporting our Future Workforce

Veena Virahsammy (Oxford Creators) shares her journey of building an alternative education provision. Integrating therapy with activities like boxing and podcasting, Veena discusses running a not-for-profit with commercial rigor and plans to raise standards nationally.



Episode 2: Growing Your Business Through International Expansion

Liz Lewis-Jones (Liquid) explains how she grew her agency from a room above a garage to an international powerhouse spanning 26 jurisdictions. This is an essential listen for SMEs navigating the complexities of global cultures, tax laws, and exchange rates.



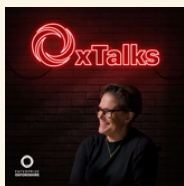
Episode 3: Launching a Successful Wellness Brand in Today's Market

Catherine Hurley Arbibe (NEWROAD) tracks her journey from Oxford medical student and Vogue model to wellness founder. She offers invaluable lessons on maintaining brand authenticity and scaling a mission-driven startup against industry giants.



Episode 4: Achieving Small Business Success Whilst Remaining Purpose-Driven

Bethan Thomas (HotTea Mama) grew her kitchen-table startup into a brand stocked in Selfridges and Holland & Barrett. Bethan demonstrates how supporting women's health is not just a social good, but a powerful driver of commercial growth.



Episode 5: What Makes a Good Modern Business Leader?

Claire Croft (Claire Croft Associates) explores the essential qualities of leadership in 2026. From transparency to developing potential, this conversation offers a clear-eyed look at why effective leadership is the ultimate tool for employee retention.



Episode 6: Supporting your Staff: Mental Health Training and Neurodiversity Awareness in the Workplace

Olga Zilberberg (The Missing Link) discusses how real cultural change starts with psychological safety. Drawing on lived experience, Olga explains why wellbeing must be rooted in everyday communication rather than just compliance.

"The success stories shared by our guests prove that remarkable business achievements start right here in Oxfordshire. Our goal is to ensure every listener can turn that inspiration into action."

- Enterprise Oxfordshire Team

Ready to listen?

[Find all episodes here!](#)



Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills

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

Investing in Oxfordshire's Future: Grundon's 100k Apprenticeship Levy Pledge

[Find out more](#)

Grundon, based in Wallingford, is a specialist provider of commercial waste collection and recycling services. Working with both private and public sector organisations, the company supports customers in reducing their environmental impact, maximising resources and finding value in their waste.

The largest family-owned supplier in the sector, it builds on nearly a century of expertise to implement world-beating technology and innovative ideas with sustainability at their core. With a £170 million turnover, Grundon employs nearly 1,000 people at operations across the southern half of the UK.

Grundon has pledged a proportion of its apprenticeship levy through Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills' Apprenticeship Levy Support Scheme to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), charities and social enterprises across Oxfordshire. This funding is expected to enable up to 17 apprenticeships to start across a range of disciplines, helping local organisations access vital training and development opportunities they may not otherwise be able to provide.



Addisen Gregory, Future Talent Lead at Grundon, said: *"The business has long recognised the value apprentices bring to business growth, innovation and community development. As a major employer with a strong commitment to supporting local talent, Grundon had been exploring meaningful ways to reinvest in its surrounding communities. Building on a collaborative relationship with Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills, the opportunity to pledge apprenticeship levy funds became a natural next step.*

"By contributing our levy funds, we hope to give SMEs and other smaller organisations the same benefits we have seen at Grundon: skilled, motivated employees who can grow and thrive, supporting personal, business and community development."

This case study explores Grundon's motivations for pledging, the benefits they expect to gain and the wider impact they hope to create for SMEs, charities and social enterprises, local people and the broader Oxfordshire community.

If you are interested in finding out more about our Apprenticeship Levy Support Scheme and either pledging or accessing levy funds, please get in touch at ApprenticeshipLevy@enterpriseoxfordshire.com

Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills

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

Careers Fest Helps the Next Generation to Find Their Future

[Find out more](#)

Around 3,000 young people from across Oxfordshire met a diverse range of the county's most inspirational businesses and organisations on 18 and 19 March, as Careers Fest – the leading employment opportunities exhibition for young people in the area – once again returned to the Kassam Stadium in Oxford.

Led by Enterprise Oxfordshire and its Oxfordshire Careers Hub, Careers Fest brings together businesses and education every year, supporting young people to think about their next steps, including inspiring them with future employment opportunities and connecting organisations with future talent.

More than 80 exhibitors attended Careers Fest this year, with 32 Oxfordshire secondary schools, special schools and further education colleges visiting across the two days and more than 800 parents and carers registering to attend a special 'twilight' session with their young people.

When asked what the best thing about Careers Fest was, one student said: *"The fact that there were lots of young people who are already really enjoying their jobs after apprenticeships and they seemed dedicated and willing to talk to the students."*



Helen Brind – Director of Business and Skills at Enterprise Oxfordshire – said: *"Careers Fest continues to prove its value as a powerful meeting point between young people and employers, creating meaningful conversations at a pivotal stage in teenagers' lives."*

"At the same time, it offers businesses the chance to connect with the future workforce as they plan for growth."

"We're delighted to once again deliver a flagship event for young people across the county and we strongly encourage parents and carers to attend the twilight session to be part of these important discussions."

Careers Fest is just one of a number of initiatives led by Oxfordshire Careers Hub to bring educators and employers together to inform and inspire local young people. If you are interested in supporting the work of Oxfordshire Careers Hub through engaging with local schools and colleges, please get in touch at skills@enterpriseoxfordshire.com.

Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills

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

Connect to Work – Supporting Inclusive Employment in Oxfordshire

[Find out more](#)

Connect to Work is a FREE, voluntary supported employment programme delivered by Enterprise Oxfordshire, in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council. The Programme brings together local employers and residents across Oxfordshire to support inclusive employment outcomes.

Oxfordshire has a diverse and growing workforce, with employers across sectors including science and technology, social care, hospitality, logistics, and green industries.

Connect to Work helps ensure:

- Local employers can confidently recruit from Oxfordshire's untapped talent pool
- More residents with health conditions or challenging circumstances can access secure, meaningful local work.
- Businesses benefit from a more inclusive, productive, and loyal workforce
- Employers receive support with employee retention as well as recruitment



Connect to Work links local employers with motivated job seekers who receive practical, personalised support from the Connect to Work team. Participants bring a wide range of skills and experience and are carefully matched to roles where they are most likely to succeed.

Employers are supported at every stage - from understanding staffing needs and finding the right people, to supporting new starters and helping employees grow and stay in work. Ongoing, in-work support helps resolve issues early, easing pressure on managers and supporting long term success.

Our aim is to make inclusive employment simple, effective, and sustainable, while meeting the real needs of Oxfordshire businesses and the people who work within them.

How to contact the Connect to Work team

For employers and partners who would like to find out more, please contact the Connect to Work team at: CtWPartners@oxfordshire.gov.uk

For individuals who would like to discuss the possibility of becoming a participant, please contact: connecttowork@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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

£1 billion funding boost for electric vans, trucks and depot charging

The Government has announced £1 billion to roll out clean trucks and vans and install EV chargers at depots, saying the move will help build resilience against fuel price uncertainty. The Zero Emissions Truck and Van grants and the Depot Charging Scheme (DCS) aim to tackle two of the biggest barriers to businesses making the switch – upfront costs and access to charging.

[Find Out More](#)

Oxfordshire Business Support

Oxford City Council launches new app to help everyone discover more of Oxford

Oxford City Council has partnered with Discover to launch the Discover App, a 'whole of place' app highlighting everything there is to shop, eat and do in the city. The free app is already a recognised tool for visitors and locals throughout the UK. It is a one-stop shop showcasing local businesses, activities and useful information to the people using it. It also acts as a business support tool. Highlighting offers, promotions, and new businesses, all tailored to individuals' preferences.

[Learn More](#)

MADE SMARTER

Are you a manufacturer looking to accelerate the growth of your business but struggling to understand the best route forward?

We understand that adopting new technology can be daunting, but we can support you throughout your journey to digitalisation, whatever stage you are currently at.

View blogs, guides, useful downloads, and case studies from Made Smarter and trusted partners. Made Smarter helps you secure this competitive edge. Find out how Made Smarter developed.

[Learn More](#)

Business Growth Service

The Business Growth Service is accessible via a new digital platform which acts as a single-entry point for tailored support.

Whether you're looking for funding, mentoring, or export advice, the platform helps you find what you need quickly and easily.

Enterprise Oxfordshire Business is integrating the Business Growth Service into our communications and promotional activities, making it easier for local businesses to discover and access support. This builds on our existing offer, which has already delivered significant impact.

[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:

Free park and ride bus travel to continue

Oxfordshire County Council's current offer of free park and ride bus journeys in Oxford will continue until at least the end of May 2026.

[Learn More](#)

Thame Country Fair

April 5th and 6th at Thame Showground, Thame

A Country show full of Country sports and pursuits with arena entertainment running throughout the day. Watch the Falconry, Gundogs, Horse Boarding, Scurry Driving and Horse Display Team.

[Learn More](#)

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