

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (REGENERATION AND SKILLS)

Marion Atkinson	Cabinet Member Regeneration and Skills	October 2023
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INVEST SEFTON

External funded programmes

Growth Hub

InvestSefton is one of the Liverpool City Region Growth Hubs working alongside the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (CA), Growth Platform, other local authorities, Chambers of Commerce and The Women's Organisation. The total value for delivery in each of the LA areas is £20,000 compared to the £50,000 of previous years. **Government has announced that Growth Hub funding has been extended until September 2023. InvestSefton will continue the delivery of the Sefton growth hub.**

UKSPF Shared Prosperity Funding

Place Based Business Support - Sefton's allocation is £782,414, which includes c.£23k top-sliced monies for central co-ordination and website development via Growth Platform. The project has been given a new delivery brand name- **Business Support Service** and a steering group chaired by Sefton has been established.

Business Start-up support- This will now be delivered via the aforementioned Place Based Business Support programme. InvestSefton commissioned support for start-ups via competitive tender for a £80,000 contract. Following evaluation this was awarded to:

- **Merseyside Expanding Horizons (MEH) & Safe Regeneration** - This is a Bootle based partnership led by MEH who manage the Big Onion in Bootle Strand shopping centre and Southport Town Hall. The Big Onion facility is equipped with co-working spaces, meeting rooms, presentation facilities, and high-speed internet connectivity, and offers an incubator hub to up to 20 new start businesses. Within Southport, they use a prime location in the Town Hall. Safe Regeneration run incubator units in Bootle from the St Mary's Complex, this is their main delivery location. Both were part of the previous LCR Enterprise hub funded under ERDF until 30 June 2023.

Town Centres business support - Similarly, the team also went to open market for a business support sustainability commission worth £60,000. Following evaluation this was awarded to:

- **Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire & Merseyside** - Groundwork is a Merseyside based national organisation with a team of professional in-house consultants and associates with a variety of technical expertise including energy auditing, carbon management and environmental training. These are supported by the Director of Business who has over 25 years' experience delivering public funded environmental / low carbon business support projects to businesses, including delivery of the SRB 6 funded Sefton Business Environment Association. Specialisms include delivery of sustainability support and action plans through

Groundwork Sustainable Business Membership scheme. The team has previously worked with Groundwork under SRB projects in south Sefton.

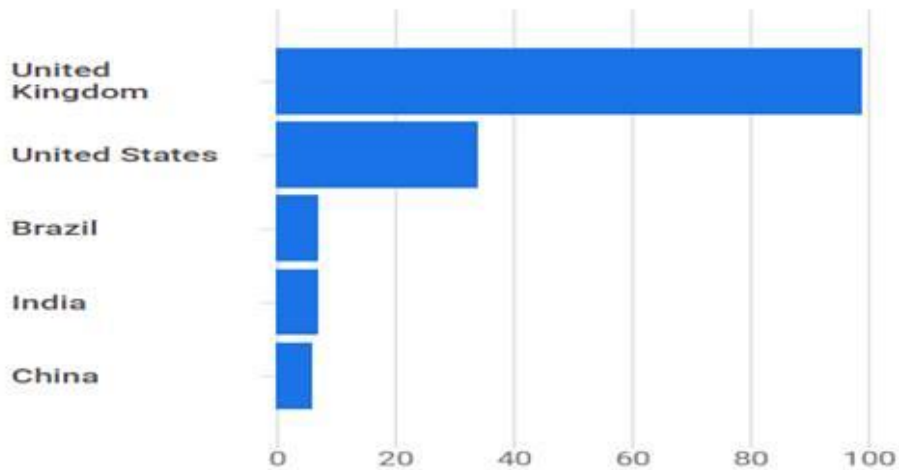
Business engagement

Business engagement-InvestSefton.com

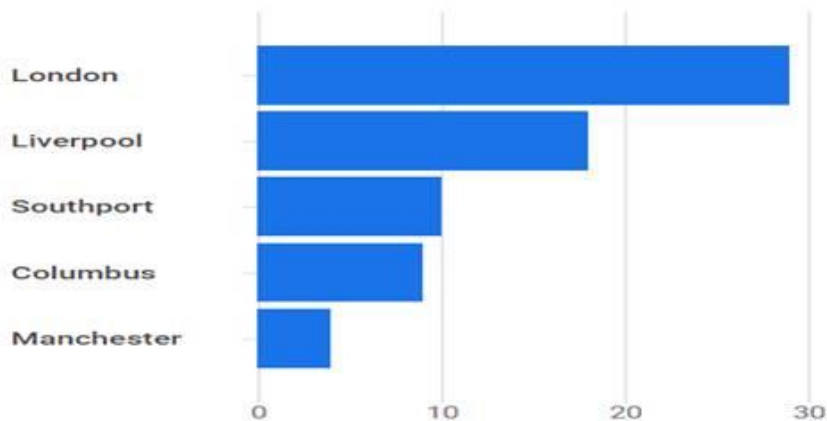
- From Friday 22nd to Thursday 28th September 2023, the website had 218 unique sessions.
- The most visits this week was on Tuesday 26th September.
- Since the new website went live on Monday 30th March 2020 until Thursday 28th September 2023, the site has had a total of **69,709** unique sessions.
- Posts on the website and twitter this week have included promoting our next Financial & Professional Networking Group on 19th October.
- InvestSefton twitter page has 1,608 followers.
- Sefton Huddle Facebook page has 24 members.

Country of origin of user of the website is broken down as follows:

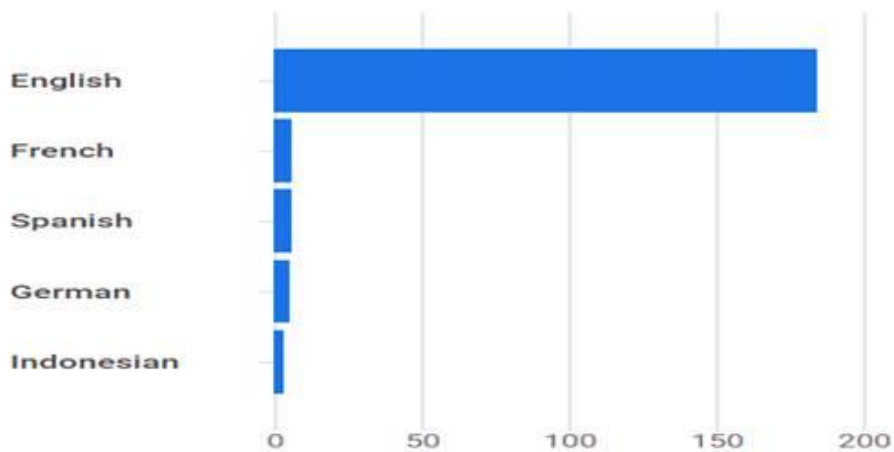
Users by Country



Users by Town/City



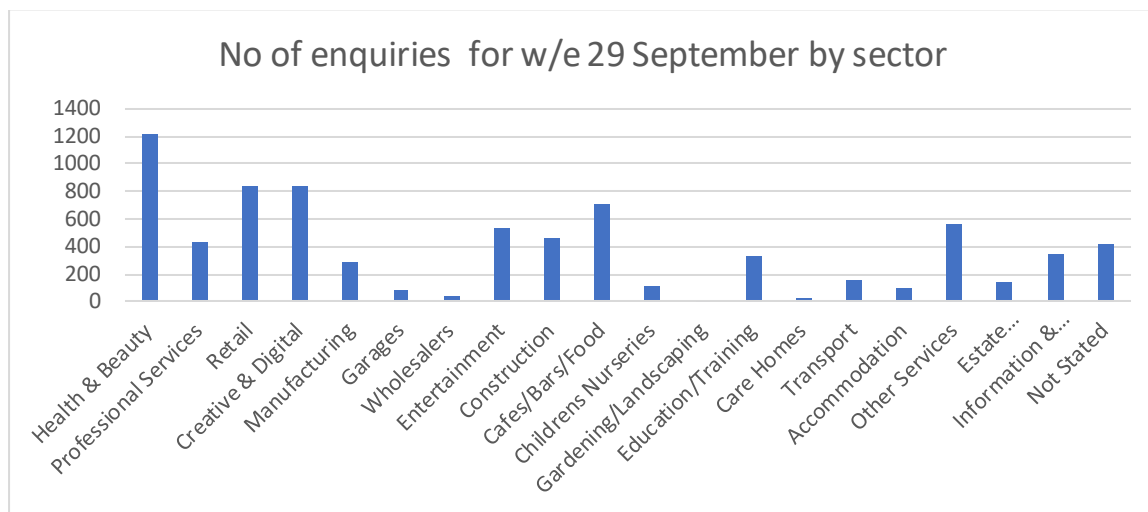
Users by Language



NB Much of the overseas traffic is generated by 'bots. While not all are legitimate and maybe be phishing, many of the US (See towns /cities) sessions will be those indexing the sites for search engines (most notably Google). The search engine bots will index the site approximately once per week. There is also the strong possibility that some of the US visitors will be ex-pats with a connection to parts of the borough or potential investors.

Business enquiries

Since March 2020 InvestSefton has handled 7,090 enquiries from a wide range of businesses.



Case studies

The team continues to engage with businesses as part of its 1:1 delivery support. Recent anonymised case studies below

Southport based business specialising in online and offline marketing. Customers include banks, UK-wide financial services providers looking to train their teams in one-to-one sales and specialist small businesses. The Business is growth orientated and looking to expand its network within Sefton and the LCR. InvestSefton supported the business by assisting with Business Planning to support their entrance into New Markets.

Bootle Based business that runs online learning for people in the legal profession. The owner used to be at a large firm of solicitors but left to develop this business. The Business needs funding and to develop their contact base. InvestSefton supported the business by investigating the most appropriate funding streams and providing support through the application process to secure funding.

A business based in Crosby which has video editing and a recording studio for musicians. The business also creates documentaries and film events for businesses, public agencies, and commercial customers. The business is keen to support other young musicians with affordable recording and rehearsal space. InvestSefton supported the business by identifying local not for profit agencies to market services to as well as grant finder research into trusts and foundations criteria, KPI's etc.

A mobile coffee shop based in Burbo Bank Crosby. The Business has a 3-year licence from Sefton Council which enables him to serve hot drinks and non-packaged food items such as crepes and toasties. The Business is now looking at possible expansion and taking over a concession at Croxteth County Park. As well as needing funding to support this the Business is also considering a battery replacement of an existing diesel generator which costs circa £25K. The Business needs to decide which should be given priority. InvestSefton supported the Business by investigating battery technology to run the existing mobile at Burbo Bank as well as fully exploring the Croxteth Park concession to secure an appropriate finance package.

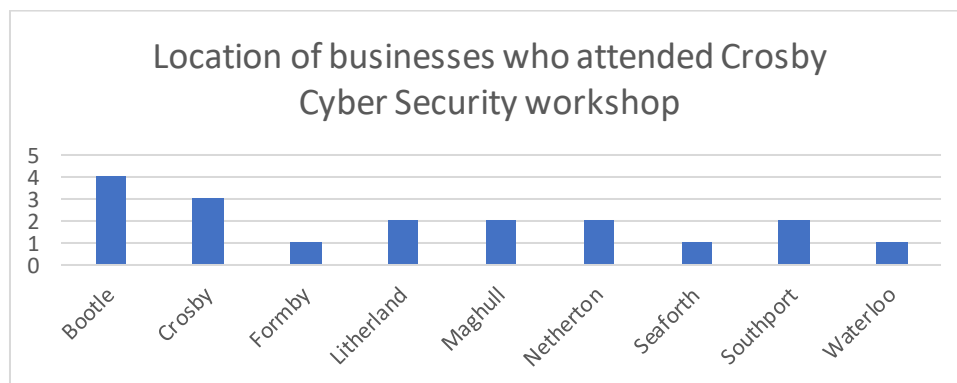
Webinars/Events

InvestSefton's webinars and events have become a useful vehicle for engaging with businesses on a one-to-many basis. The most recent events were two Cyber Workshops- These interactive sessions gave businesses a greater understanding of the cyber risks they are likely to face and how to reduce these risks, including:

- Phishing, passwords, networks, malware, and social media
- Live demonstrations and real-world examples
- Ask the cyber expert Q&A
- Developing an action plan
- Certificate of completion

The workshops are part a wider **Merseyside Cyber Security Programme**, which includes a free 12-month programme of support.

20th September 2023 -The Lake House, Crosby



- 19 business delegates of which 9 were Female attended.
- 22 evaluations were completed-selected feedback included:

"Looking forward to next event. "

"Some really valuable information provided".

"Bigger screen needed".

"Really interesting and thought-provoking topic. Knowledgeable presenters in Jacob and Nathan"

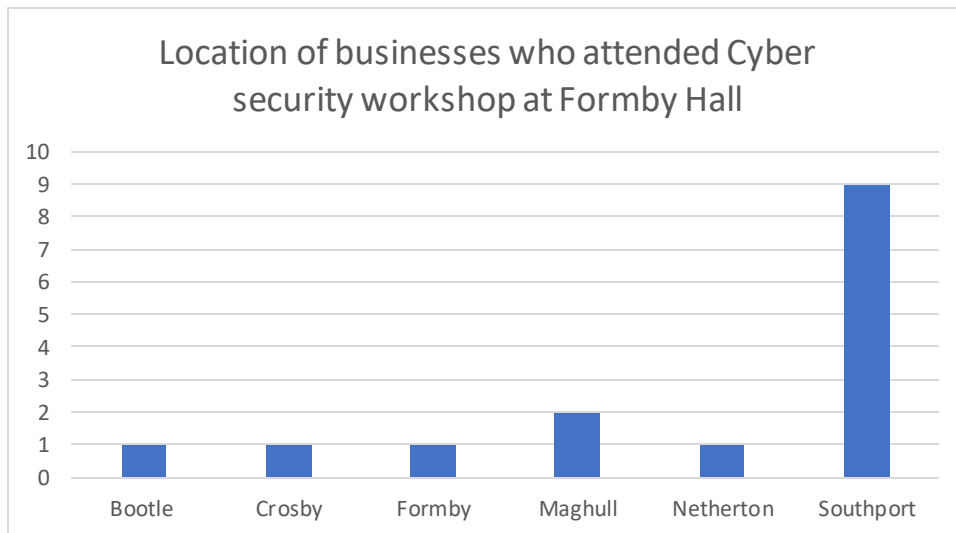
"Perhaps a longer event when there is so much information to be shared".

"Much prefer in person events than online".

"Well structured, good example, well presented and organised, useful information and follow on support".

"There is so much info on this course, may need longer or follow up courses to go into more detail"

21st September 2023 - Formby Hall Golf Resort and Spa



- 17 business delegates of which 8 were Female attended.
- 14 evaluations were completed-selected feedback included:

"Very good event, knowledgeable hosts"

"Zoom option would have been good".

"Very informative, you will learn a lot and pick up new things, as well as meet new businesses".

"A great presentation that was very informative with concise information I can take back and use".

"Well presented and made interactive".



Employment & Learning O & S October 2023

Strategic Investment Funding – Ways to Work continuation interim grant.

Sefton has now received a draft grant offer letter for 6 months for the continuation of Ways to Work after the expiry of the European Social funding at the end of September 2023.

Ways to Work – UK Shared Prosperity Funding for 2024/25

The UKSPF investment plan incorporates resource for providing assistance to people out of the workforce to re-enter work and for assistance with large scale recruitment or redundancy.

This funding will only cover support for people who meet the economically inactive group, as defined by DLUHC, as follows:

‘Economically inactive individuals are those not in work and not actively seeking work (unlike unemployed individuals who are actively seeking work). Not all economically inactive individuals claim benefits. For those that do, this would include those claiming either “legacy” benefits or those within specific conditionality regimes in Universal Credit: The former includes Employment Support Allowance (ESA), Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Income Support (IS). The latter includes claimants within the Preparation Requirement or Work Focused Interview Requirement conditionality regimes. There is no length of time on inactivity required. People count if they are 16+.’

Young Persons Guarantee

Further discussions have taken place on the delivery options for this Metro Mayoral promise. LA Growth Directors have proposed that this should be delivered as a wage incentive through the LA Ways to Work provider network. This proposal appears to have been accepted by the LCR-CA and negotiations are ongoing to allocate the funding and implement the programme. In effect, the Ways to Work service would be undertaking this scheme via the structure to be funded by SIF/UKSPF as there is insufficient finance to operate this as a stand-alone scheme.

Sefton@work General Performance Data for September 2023

Data Description	Range	Figures
Total Clients accessing service	Since 01/01/2016	5,778 – numbers vary due to GDPR clean up quarterly
New Clients accessing service	September 2023	62
New clients registering by age	September 2023	16-24 11 25-49 44 50+ 6 Unknown 1
W2W contracts Male	Since 01/01/16 September 2023	58.1% 55.6%
W2W contracts Female	Since 01/01/16 September 2023	41.8% 44.4%
W2W contracts Other	Since 01/01/16 September 2023	0.1% 0.0%
ESF clients with Disabilities/Health Conditions	Since 01/01/2016 September 2023	31.0% 44.4%
ESF clients without basic skills	Since 01/01/2016	30.0%

	September 2023	33.3%
Supporting Families (new project replacing Turnaround)	Current Active Total	30
People leaving the programme (into jobs/self-emp/training)	Since 01/01/2016	W2W & PI + 200 from other programmes Total 2,355
Ways to Work Starts	Since 01/01/2016 September 2023	5,026 77
Positive Inclusions Starts	Since 01/01/2021 September 2023	207 Project now closed
Footfall (Face to Face contact) (sub category of Overall Service Demand)	September 2023	944
Overall Service Demand	September 2023	1,771

Sefton@work Relocation

Work is moving forward with the relocation of Sefton@work into Bootle Strand Unit and the appointed contractors, Jennor's, are forecasting that the programme of works will be complete by mid-November. An employer agent called Arcus Ltd has been appointed to provide the project management functions on our behalf as this could not be accommodated by the Council's Property Services team.

The relocation project plan reflects arrangements for communications with service users, stakeholders and referral agencies and there will be a period of transfer of operations and final snagging etc. we are expecting the full transfer of services across to the new Unit will take place early in the New Year.

Sefton@work is a National Inclusion Award Finalist

Sefton@Work staff are delighted to have been selected as a finalist for the highly esteemed Inclusive Awards' Social Mobility Project Award. The team's commitment to empowering individuals in Sefton, helping them overcome their barriers, find fulfilling employment, and build vital skills and confidence has earned us the nomination. It demonstrates the dedication and positive impact our service has and positive impact on our clients and residents of Sefton.

Voluntary Routeways

Recruitment is now completed for the Voluntary Routeway Programme which offers placements to those who need experience to enhance their CVs or easing back into the world of work. Placements are offered within SMBC School Meals, Sandway Homes, Sefton Libraries (Formby & Crosby), Green Sefton, Sefton CAB, Sefton Adult Community Learning, Sefton@work, Citizens Advice Bootle and Citizens Advice Southport. This programme responds to needs of client groups who are struggling to enter the labour market through mainstream recruitment processes. 18 clients in total started their 10-week part-time placement at the end of September and also benefitted from an accredited 2-day pre-placement course delivered by SACL. Clients have been provided with any uniforms required and all travel expenses will be reimbursed. Recruitment for the routeways has not been limited to economically inactive clients.

Bespoke Programmes to Support Employability

Following the analysis of diagnostic assessments of client barriers to progression Sefton@Work has embarked on the delivery of a range of bespoke interventions working with other SMBC Departments. Fit For Success was designed with Active Sefton as a programme to tackle mental health, wellbeing, social inclusion and mindset among clients who are disillusioned and disengaged. This programme was delivered one day per week for 5 weeks and started early September. It promoted a positive mindset and included class-based activities in Water Sports such as rafting, kayaking and dragon boating for team working and confidence building. Following completion of the course clients were provided with a 3-month gym pass for Sefton Leisure Centres to continue on their wellbeing pathway. An additional pathway designed with younger people in mind called Find Your Purpose is also operating with a target group of young people referred from Early Help, Youth Justice team and Supporting Families.

New Rolling programme of Employment Support Sessions in the Strand

In preparation for our move, we are developing a package of group-led activity in partnership with SCLS so that a running programme of intervention and support is available every day in the new training room. We are looking at both job-focused and wellbeing led interventions to support clients.

Digital Inclusion

In collaboration with LCR and Lloyds Bank Foundation, Sefton@Work has taken steps to reduce the digital divide among Sefton residents. By providing access to IT courses, we have empowered clients with digital skills essential for job searching and various online activities, including banking. Notably, the 41 clients who completed these courses were given tablets and data plans, ensuring that they can continue to engage in these vital online activities beyond their job search, further enhancing their digital inclusion and overall wellbeing. Following this, clients are being invited to attend our pop-up job shop sessions in the Strand with their tablets to develop their skills.

Emerging Themes, Issues or Developments

Changes within JCP for Universal Credit claimants around 'working enough' are now mandatory, with further changes planned for introduction in December. This is targeting claimants working a small number of hours/low wage, who are still dependent on UC. The objective is to look at how they can increase their hours, get additional paid work or a higher paid role elsewhere that takes them 'off benefit'. We are working with our clients to ensure they are aware of this change and promote how we can support them navigate this. Increased numbers of those affected are seeking support from us but generally these clients are not seeking extra hours as they have working arrangements in place that fit their personal circumstances. This places these clients at risk of further action from JCP in retaining their benefit.

Merseyside Expanding Horizons "The Big Onion" – self-employment support

A small contract has been let to the Big Onion to deliver a pilot for group sessions and support for workless residents seeking to become non-traditional entrepreneurs. This includes people with experience of care, survivors of domestic abuse and long-term inactive people. The contract is being managed by Employment & Learning and funded by the Growth Budget.

Sefton@Work has many clients that express an interest in developing their own enterprise and will deliver a referral pathway to this provision which will commence in November.

Sefton@work Case studies

A number of case studies are contained in the newsletter here [Sefton@Work Flash Extra Issue 02 – July 2023](#)

Sefton Caring Business Charter Update

The team working on the Charter has reviewed and adapted the Beacon newsletter to allow for young people and their support workers/families to have more background information about each of the opportunities available through Charter employers, organized by opportunity type.


There has also been a roundtable discussion between Council department representatives as part of National Inclusion Week, where progress and forward planning for the Charter were discussed.

A Careers Market Place was hosted at the Cambridge Road centre on 25th October. This included information and insights from Charter companies and some curated service offerings suggested by young people and their support workers. There was also be 10 jobs available for applications on the day (ringfenced for this client group) and secured by Sefton@work. The event took a holistic approach and included a range of specialist support services such as Housing Options, Welfare Benefits, Life Rooms and Paul's Place, We utilised the immersive room and its technology to engage in fun, informal learning activities and invited wellbeing practitioners on the day to offer complimentary therapies.

Sefton Adult Community Learning Service- General Performance Update

The table below indicates the year-to-date figures. It is notable that while the number of learners need to be increased, there is a pattern of a majority of learners, progressing through more than one learning aim, showing confidence in service and progression from one to onto another. 23/24 shows a slight reduction in the number of learners on this time last year, this is due to an inputting lag and true figures will be reflected in the next report.

Of the expected number of learners booked on to attend a course in September 93% actually attended and have started.

Performance update  Year to Date Comparison 1st August to 31st July	Target	18/19*	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
	Total number of learners	2000	484	538	159	272	495
Total number of unique learning aims	2940	576	643	196	305	564	521
* 18/19 was the last full year before covid							

Engagement and Events

To increase the visibility and profile of the service, the following events were attended throughout September:

- 7th September Health Hub in Crosby – 6 people attended, 2 signed up for initial assessments with 1 progressing onto a community learning course.

- 9th and 10th Southport Air Show – 24 individuals signed-up and took part in Family Learning Activities.
- 13th September Life-room 'Getting Back into Work' poorly attended.
- 14th September Sefton's Eco Event – 6 individual enrolled and completed a creative and well-being activity on the day.
- 16th September The Autumn Fair Marine Gardens – Friends of the Coastal – 21 x Family Learning and 8 x Creative and Wellbeing enrolments.
- 26th September Coffee Morning – the Service raised £238.80 through selling cakes and candles to learners and visitors.
- 5th Oct took part in the DWP Partnership meeting promoting the service to LCR, Expanding Horizons, National Careers Service, Homes into Work, Complete Skills Solutions and Talent Match.
- DWP will be hosting an event at the Centre on 23rd November focusing on 50+ for the first hour followed by a general open day for the remainder of the event.
- The Service is currently planning and developing its 2024 Spring prospectus.

Pathways to Teaching Project

Following the success of 2022/2023 Pathways to Teaching Pilot Liverpool City Region have provided further funding to run it once again. The Service expects to start recruiting for the programme early November with its first starts expected in December.

A Pathways to Teaching Celebration event will be held on 8th November - This is a great opportunity to come together and share the successes of the 2022/2023 Pathways.

New Test and Learn Pilots for 2023/24

This year we have negotiated 3 new pilots for Test and Learn, as follows:

ESOL - This programme will incorporate volunteering to support English Language Teaching and Learning with existing ESOL related curriculum models by provider learners with the basic skills required to support teaching and learning of ESOL in a wide range of contexts. This programme will create and develop both non-accredited and accredited course content that will target learners who would like to gain experience in an education setting or may have learned ESOL themselves.

Family Learning - This programme will incorporate a variety of short Family Learning courses in interesting subjects to provide hooks into more traditional learning into numeracy, literacy and/or digital skills at Sefton Community Learning, creating six new courses that will be developed, including course materials and innovative resources.

Sector Specific - This programme will develop a variety of short taster session courses, including virtual training, that will act as a stepping-stone into green jobs. Working closely with local employers, training materials and simulated experiences will be developed to aid in training, education and career decision making choices.

Multiply numeracy provision

The following VCS organisations were successful in securing Multiply grant awards for the delivery of innovative maths interventions:

- Merseyside Expanding Horizons "Big Onion"
- Acronym Community Empowerment
- Phoenix Youth and Community Centre

- The Inclusion Network
- Rotunda

All delivery went live on the 1st September and the first cohort of learning has started with progression and next-steps appointments scheduled to discuss transition into core service. Contracts are being managed via Employment & Learning and include specific expectations about the progression of learners taking part in Multiply sessions being linked to AEB progression learning.

SACL Case Study

Emma Leyland Learner Journey, Level 3 Award in Education (Pathway to Teaching)

“The Level 3 Award in Education and Training course was exactly the kind of opportunity I had been looking for to re-train and re-establish myself in employment. I've always enjoyed working with people in an educational setting so training to become a community learning tutor seemed like a natural progression from my previous experience.

Training at Sefton Community Learning Service (SCLS) has been a great experience for me. I have really enjoyed the opportunities the course has provided. Our course tutor Jayne and all the staff have been very supportive throughout. After completing the course, I have now moved onto the next step and I'm really looking forward to working at SCLS, delivering programmes to assist other adult learners towards attaining successful outcomes. Look out for my 'Origami for Beginners' course in January 2024. Hope to see you there!”

Britta Kuhnen, Level 3 Award in Education (Pathway to Teaching)

“My New Year's resolution was to make more time for myself and what better way to do this than learning a new skill. I came across Sefton Community Learning Service (SCLS) on social media and signed up for the Level 3 Award in Education which is a post 16 and adult teaching qualification. I previously taught craft workshops so know that I enjoy sharing knowledge and interacting with people.

On completion of my qualification, I applied for a job as sessional tutor at SCLS and was successful. I really like the community spirit here and I am looking forward to delivering a wide variety of classes and meeting more learners!”

Success for Ukrainian Learners



Dennis Glynn (ESOL Curriculum Manager) with ESOL students' Krystyna Skyba, Natalia Bolotova & Olena Medvedieva notifying classmate Alina Kudriashova (via face time to Ukraine) that she has achieved ESOL Speaking & Learning Entry Level 1.

Dennis Glynn states, 'I have nothing but admiration for our ESOL learners. This photograph is testament to the many who continue to demonstrate an unbreakable spirit in the face of such unimaginable adversity.'

NEET Reduction and Early Intervention Service

August 2023 NEET Performance

The following outlines the progress made by the service in August 2023. All data is cleansed locally and verified with government sources using the NCCIS database which each LA is required to update monthly.

Table 1 – Liverpool City Region Comparisons – Academic Age 16 – 17 NEET/NK

Area	NEET	NK	Combined	Current NEET Rank	Current NK Rank	Combined Rank
Sefton	3.4%	0.4%	3.8%	1	1	1
Wirral	3.9%	1.4%	5.3%	2	4	2
NORTHWEST	4.4%	1.8%	6.1%			
Knowsley	5.9%	0.5%	6.5%	3	2	3
ENGLAND	3.4%	3.7%	7.0%			
Halton	6.4%	0.9%	7.4%	5	3	4
St Helens	6.6%	1.6%	8.1%	6	5	5
Liverpool	6.3%	4.6%	10.9%	4	6	6

The table indicates:

- Sefton continues to have the lowest % rate for all 3 measures across the Greater Merseyside LA areas, and is below both Northwest and England
- Sefton statistical neighbour comparison for 16-17 NEET and NK % ranked 2nd lowest in August 2023, the same as this time last year
- Sefton 16-17 NEET/NK is -2.3% below Northwest and -3.2% below England.
- 42.92% of our NEET/NK cohort are within one or more of our vulnerable groups (94 out of 219) – this indicates the level of complex issues facing these young people.
- Although our NEET figure of 3.4% has increased by 0.28% year on year – 18 more young people, it is still 1% below the Northwest average at 4.4%
- At 0.4%, our NK has reduced by 0.28% year on year, 1.4% below the Northwest and 3.3% below England, demonstrating the validation of our data.

Year on Year Comparisons

Academic Age 16-17 Combined NEET and Not Known Indicator	August 23	August 22
2022/23 Previous Performance	3.73%	3.84%
2023/24 16-17 Combined NEET and NK%	3.83%	3.73%

Difference	0.10%	-0.11%
2023/24 16-17 Combined NEET and NK figures	219	211
2023/24 16-17 Combined Cohort Figure	5711	5651

Academic Age 16-17 Actual NEET	August 23	August 22
2022/23 Previous Performance	3.11%	3.16%
2023/24 16-17 Actual NEET %	3.40%	3.11%
Difference	0.28%	-0.05
2023/24 16-17 Actual NEET figure	194	176
2023/24 16-17 Total Cohort	5711	5651

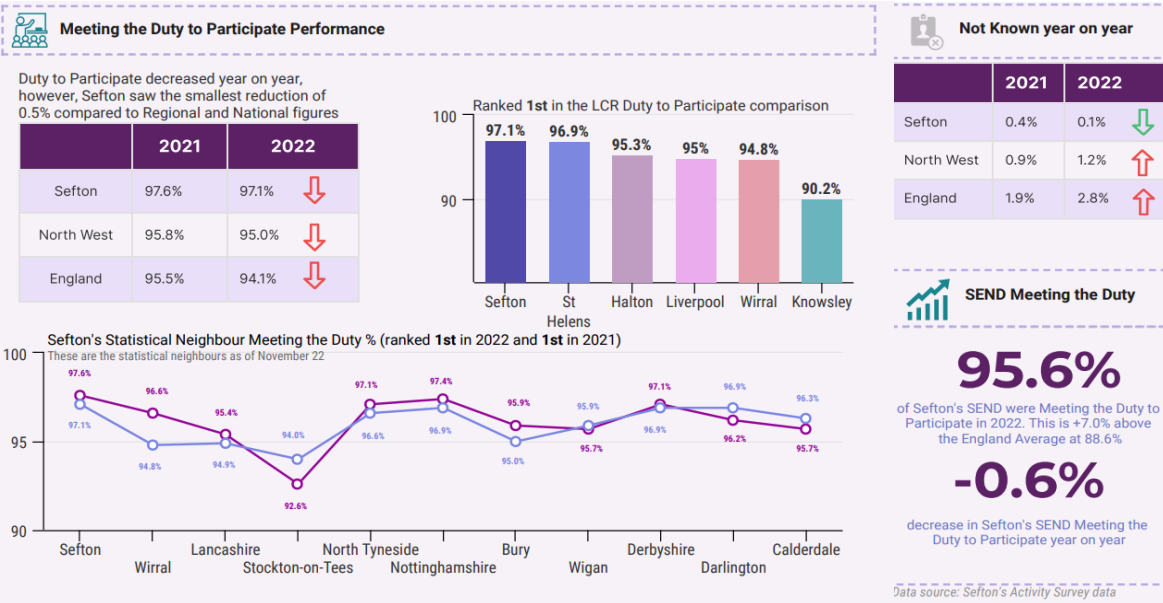
Academic Age 16-18 Actual NEET	August 23	August 22
2022/23 Previous Performance	3.74%	3.94%
2023/24 16-17 Actual NEET %	4.18%	3.74%
Difference	0.44%	-0.20%
2023/24 16-17 Actual NEET figure	356	314
2023/24 16-17 Total Cohort	8522	8393

NEET Joiners and Leavers	August 23	August 22
Total NEET Joiners	36	26
Total NEET Leavers	23	24

- NEET for 16/17 has increased by 18 young people in comparison to August 22, however, it is important to note that the overall cohort number has actually increased by 60.
- 18-year-old NEET has increased by 24 young people year on year
- There has been an increase of 129 young people 16-18 within the cohort compared to 2022.

Sefton Moving on Data – Year 11 Performance for 2022

This information is part of the Activity Survey and September Guarantee for 2022 year 11 leavers, it is published annually by the NCCIS.



- Sefton's outcomes for learning in 2022 achieved 97.1%, this is 2.1% higher than the Northwest and 3% higher than the England.
- At 95.6%, our SEND outcomes were 7% higher than the England average at 88.6%
- Sefton ranked 1st and the best LCR area with Wirral being Sefton's only statistical neighbour.
- Sefton Not Known at 0.1% shows an excellent contact rate and validates the accuracy of our data.

Care Experienced Young People (In borough)

Age	NEET	%	EET	%	Total
16	3	11.50%	23	88.50%	26
17	4	13%	27	87%	31
18	20	53.00%	18	47%	38
	27	28%	68	72%	95

- As part of the NEET Reduction and Early Intervention Service offer, Career Connect are responsible for 55% of the cohort post 16 – i.e. those young people living in the borough.
- Of the 95 16-18 year olds within our cohort, 72% are in EET and 28% NEET
- An additional 76 (45%) young people live outside of the borough and are supported through Virtual Schools
- Year 11 Total Cohort (in and out of borough) is 50 young people of the 26 who live in Sefton, 5 are currently NEET and 45 have moved into EET.
- In February 2022, 75% of the total year 11 cohort were assessed and identified as at risk of NEET and supported through early intervention, this has been an important fact and reflects in the high EET numbers.

Current Activity

Career Connect are continuing to follow up, engage and support 284 year 11 leavers at Risk of NEET of these, 246 (87%) have progressed in EET outcomes, 5 have moved out of the area and 33 remain NEET.

September Guarantee Performance

2023 September Guarantee Performance – Year 11	Nos	%
2023 Year 11 with an 'offer' recorded	3124	98.80%
2023 Year 11 No Offers	38	1.20%
2023 Year 11 Total Cohort	3162	100%

2023 September Guarantee Performance – Year 12	Nos	%
2023 Year 12 with an 'offer' recorded	2774	95.00%
2023 Year 12 No Offers	146	5.00%
2023 Year 12 Total Cohort	2920	100%

Transition support and cohort checks all year groups – 3162 Year 11 Leavers.

In September Career Connect updated **7217** records all ages – **5521** with 16/17-year-olds. This included **808** substantial meaningful intervention with all age groups. In October there are a further 1500 to track and support.

Social Value – Job Creation

As part of its social value commitment, Career Connect have now recruited a care experienced young person through the Caring Business Charter. The young person is 17 and lives in Sefton, she has already participated in a taster day at Cambridge Road and has accepted the position. Relevant checks are now being completed and a start date for November has been agreed.

National Awards

Career Connect have been shortlisted for the Children and Young People Now (CYPN) Award in recognition of their work in Early Intervention. The results will be announced at an Event in London on 23rd November. A CYPN journalist has approached Sarah Vaughan – this is an excellent opportunity to showcase the innovative approach and good practice our service has to offer – the article will be published in December

Tourism

Business Tourism

The City Region Visitor Economy Sustainability Task Force (of which Southport Conference Bureau is part of) partnered with the 2030 Hub as part of Global Goals Week on 18th September at The Spine, Liverpool. The event promoted a sustainable visitor economy with representation from industry professionals such as Visit Britain and MIA (Meetings Industry Association) and local businesses promoting their products and services.

Working with Invest Sefton we have secured a provider to deliver training to local businesses across retail, accommodation and hospitality sector. The schedule of work will commence

this month until end of March 25 and Southport Conference Bureau will be supporting the training delivery to businesses. The training will support businesses to measure their carbon footprint, produce an action plan to reduce their carbon emissions and design a sustainability policy.

Destination Marketing

Destination Campaign – Autumn will consist of social media, website updates and e-newsletter to our database (circa 50,000 contacts). We are working on Christmas in conjunction with Southport BID. As well as the digital element Christmas, will include some OOH (48 sheet digital signs), a mobile campaign and digital audio.

PR – We have a journalist from I Paper visiting 27-29 October. Our agency has put out a release and list of Halloween / half term activity and we are currently working on similar for Christmas.

Visitor Guide – Work is well underway on the 2024 guide and we are now at the final amends stage. This will go to print in January (print costs lower in January than December) Distribution will commence at the end of January.

Southport Restaurateurs Association – The 2024 guide is nearing sign-off with print in November. It will be distributed alongside the visitor Guide at the end of January. There has also been a small local radio / digital campaign running through October and into November.

E-newsletter - Database stands at circa 52,000 with the addition of 2022/2023 data and regular newsletters are sent to this audience (the latest being as part of the autumn campaign).

Travel Trade – Our stand at British Tourism & Travel Show (March 2024) has been booked. We attended The Group Leisure & Travel Show in Milton Keynes on 5 October, this was on a stand-share basis with Liverpool. It was reasonably successful, and contacts made will be assessed before committing to 2024.

Advertising continues to be placed in key travel trade publications. Three pieces of editorial have been written and free additional space for this has been secured with all ads booked to date.

Golf – We continue to work with England's Golf Coast and Southport Golf Tours to ensure better co-ordination between the three partners and a draft golf activity plan has been produced.

Marketing Southport – membership currently stands at 101 (102 this time last year).

A Marketing Southport board meeting was held on 19 September, with the next one scheduled for 16 January.

Brand – Work has commenced on reviewing the current agency and destination branding. The newly appointed agency will work on the branding mid to late 2024. Current branding will be used for the 2024 campaign. The new brand will also look how to utilise the Coast as a standalone brand.

Events

Southport Air Show - 9th & 10th September

- The condition of the beach has continued to be challenging in relation to car parking.

- The decision to cancel beach parking was taken Saturday morning in the hope that the good weather would dry it out.
- The Marine Drive parking from Fairways was due to open at 10am along with the beach but was opened earlier to help with traffic flow.
- Unfortunately, the Red Arrows which were due to fly at 12 noon on the Saturday cancelled due to the weather at Blackpool Airport. They did a fly past at around 2pm.
- Traders all had a successful weekend.
- The Military Village was well received by customers.
- The attendance figures were over 36,000 over the 2 days, which is consistent with recent years.

The British Musical Fireworks Championship – 22nd & 23rd September

- The Friday night of the Fireworks was cancelled for health & safety reasons due to high winds which were blowing in the direction of the crowd.
- The decision was made to let the Friday competitors compete on the Saturday meaning there were 6 displays.
- Arrangements were made to open the gates earlier and event finished slightly later than usual.
- The Friday night customers were given an automatic refund.
- The Saturday night event sold out.
- The presentation ceremony took place at Southport Market and the winning team were Imperial Lotus.

Event dates 2024

Southport Food & Drink Festival – 31st May, 1st & 2nd June

Southport Air Show – 13th & 14th July

British Musical Fireworks Championship – 20th & 21st September

Salt & Tar - Bootle

Meetings with community groups within Bootle and The Strand, and joining their local networks have been completed and will continue to create a strong working relationships.

Scoping out opportunities for community engagement to help give the site some local personality and character has commenced.

Organising the marketing, trader recruitment and site logistics for a Festive Food and Drink Market event in December is underway.

We are supporting The Strand with their Christmas event with use of the site for a fairground and taking on a Steward Manager role on the day.

Mapping out 2024 event calendar with supporting event detail plan and budget focused on 3 major events and monthly food and drink events linked with entertainment is underway and will be shared in due course.

Southport Pier

Southport Pier remains closed to the public following the visual inspection of structural engineers in December. Two detailed structural reports have also been completed and have been published along with a FAQ on Sefton's website.

Work is ongoing with regards to detailed cost and survey work along with the procurement of a main contractor while funding conversations continue.

MLEC

The Marine Lake Events Centre is progressing with key milestones being met, when finished the £73m venue will generate over £18m to the local economy and attract an additional 500,000 visitors to Southport.

Some of the key milestones achieved to date include:

- Appointment of Kier Construction to undertake the work under the pre-construction service agreement.
- Site Hoarding installed.
- Utility disconnections completed and major utility diversion orders processing. United Utilities technical approval received for the drainage diversion works. Legal work to progress the Section Agreement underway.
- Condition Surveys of adjacent properties progressing
- Completion of RIBA Stage 4 Design work. Works packages now being priced up.

Southport Conference Bureau and Regeneration Team hosted a careers event at Southport Market for 180 Year 9 Meols Cop High School students on 6th September. The morning session of the event gave students the opportunity to hear about the exciting opportunities connected to the MLEC project and the wider Town Deal regeneration projects. In the afternoon the students were set activities supported by local industry representation.

Accompanied by G&T, we met with Hugh Baird College Construction curriculum leaders to introduce the benefits of the MLEC project. A presentation by the professional team will be delivered early 2024. The meeting was extremely positive, and several initiatives are taking place in the short term:

30th Nov, Women in Construction session. Will be attended by members of the project team (AFL, Sefton, G&T, IPW, CBRE and Kier). The session will be open to the whole college for females to come and hear about roles in construction, career routes and challenges and will also include a Q&A session.

4 x masterclasses are being delivered over the next 3 months (Nov – Jan) by various members of the wider MLEC professional team with more to follow Jan – March 2024.

On 16th November we have secured free hire of the main function room at The Waterfront Hotel to host an event in partnership with MLEC architects AFL and MLEC Project Management consultants, Gardiner & Theobald. The event will focus on the design of the MLEC and set a task for the students to design the hoardings around set themes. The designs will be rotated and the same opportunity to produce some designs will be provided in the south of the borough later in the construction programme.

Visitor Economy

The 2022 Tourism STEAM figures have now also been calculated, the 2022 season was another strong season for Sefton, Key highlights include:

- Visitors number up 33% to 7.6m
- Total employment up 30% to 6,111
- Economic Impact up 38% to £594m

REGENERATION : GROWTH & INVESTMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Regeneration Service support the Growth and Strategic Investment Programme for Sefton by helping to deliver a number of key Council projects and programmes across the borough. These includes a mix of direct delivery and project development work. The team also manage the monitoring and reporting for external capital grant projects. This update provides the current position on these projects.

BOOTLE

Bootle Town Centre

The Council is moving forward the next stages of work for repurposing Bootle Strand Shopping Centre including utilising the Salt n Tar event space referenced above.

Strand Transformation Programme

The next phase of Bootle Strand's repurposing programme is underway with the planning application submission for demolition work of a small part of Bootle Strand to open it up onto the Salt n Tar site next to the canal. Details of the proposals can be found on the Council's Website - [Bootle Strand \(sefton.gov.uk\)](https://www.sefton.gov.uk) including details of the planning application for the Phase 1 demolition works, submitted in October 2023. If approved this will enable start on site early in the new year. A tender was also issued in October 2023 for a contractor to carry out this work.

A Stakeholder communication and engagement plan is now in place to support this project and programme of work. This went through Sefton's Council Consultation and Engagement Panel in September 2023, who reviewed the project and the proposed approach to engagement with key local stakeholders. This included those directly affected and those who currently use the Strand. Part of the engagement work includes opening a shop unit in the Strand which is now open to the public to share information on this key project. In addition, there will be media updates/announcements at key stages throughout the project life. Details of information shared within the shop unit are included here - [the-strand visualisation-presentation-boards final.pdf \(sefton.gov.uk\)](#) The dedicated SECC unit in the Strand includes information for local stakeholders about the proposals and how to submit comments and feedback.

Highway works including a road closure of part of the Strand service road will be required for the demolition works to take place and to implement the proposed works. The planning application for the demolition works includes the proposed highway changes needed to enable the demolition to happen. This will involve the partial closure of the access from Washington Parade, and a new two-way system of the Service Road via Vermont Way.

SOUTHPORT

Southport Town Deal

Work is ongoing for delivery of the Southport Town Deal programme in accordance with the approved business cases agreed with the Towns Fund in 2022.

The Enterprise Arcade, Southport

Refurbishment of Crown Buildings in Southport's town centre for a new business hub is another key Town Deal project. This will be the first ever purpose-built workspaces for start-up creative and digital businesses in Southport and forms part of the Southport Town Deal programme for generating economic growth.

Design work is finished for the construction contract and the final stages of the construction contractor appointment are being finalised, including the scope of works and programme with a view to starting on site this year.

Les Transformation de Southport

The first phase of transportation improvements, focusing on the area around Southport Market – Kings Street, Market Street, East Bank Street. Market Street and Eastbank Street is progressing detailed design work with a view to commencing on site early in 2024 to avoid seasonal disruption. This exciting project should help transform this area of the town centre and update the public realm.

Building a Better Customer Experience

New learning modules have now been developed by Southport College and have been rolled out amongst existing and new learners.

The pilot of the Building Better Customer Experience Training with Southport College has now been completed, in total 68 learners participated in the pilot including existing learners currently enrolled at the college and employees of a local business. The feedback received during and after the pilot programme was exceptionally positive and Southport College are now proposing to roll the course out to larger cohorts to meet demand. Training for volunteers and workless people through Sefton's Adult & Community Learning service is also proposed as part of this pilot programme.

CROSBY

Crosby Town Centre Regeneration

Crosby New and Existing Library at Waterloo

Sefton Council has announced it is pursuing the futures of both Crosby Village and Waterloo Library as two separate schemes in August 2023.

Crosby Lakeside

Nearing completion, the Crosby Lakeside Bunkbarn project is due to complete in November 2023. Initial information about the venue has been sent out to local schools.

Former Sands Public House, Shore Road, Ainsdale.

Sefton Council went out to the market for the former Sands Public House in Ainsdale (Opposite Pontins) in 2022, following soft market testing that indicated a sufficient level of interest to encourage a formal marketing of the site.

Sefton is assessing responses received and carrying out further discussion with parties who have expressed an interest as part of ongoing due diligence. Marketing of the site will continue in the interim. Marketing Website link: [Former Sands Public House, Shore Road, Ainsdale, Ainsdale, PR8 2QD | Property to rent | Savills](#) and [Shore Road, Ainsdale, PR8 | Fitton Estates](#)

Ainsdale Neighbourhood Centre, Sandbrook Way

In February 2023 Cabinet agreed the next stage of work to bring this centre into full Council ownership , including continuing negotiations with outstanding owners.

Cabinet agreed to progress appointing agents to explore the market for this site, in order to support the Council's ambitions for change. Work is ongoing, however initial expressions of interest from the market are positive and the results are being considered by officers and members.

Details of the marketing brochure can be found here: [Sandbrook Way, Ainsdale PR8 3RW - Keppie Massie](#)