



The Marches Local Skills Report - Annex A, B & C

A Final Report by Hatch
January 2022

Marches Skills Advisory Panel

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Contents Page

Appendix A - Core Indicators

Appendix B - Additional Analysis And References

Appendix C - Positive Impact Stories

Appendix A - Core Indicators

Local Landscape

Summary – Local Landscape

The main challenges and opportunities arising as a result of the context of the local area, and reflected in the Core Indicators data, are as follows.

Challenges:

- Deprivation is especially high in education, skills and training
- Ageing population, faster rate than England average
- Lower wages than England average
- Productivity gap compared to England average

Opportunities:

- Employment specialised in adult social care, construction and manufacturing, UK Government priority and quite COVID-19 resilient sectors
- Higher business birth rate than England average
- Consistently higher employment rate than England average with lower claimant count rate

- A.1 The Marches [Draft Local Industrial Strategy](#) sets out the twin priorities of clean (net-zero) growth and productivity growth. These priorities are evidently well founded when considering the following evidence, with both GVA per hour worked and wages below that of England, the Marches' fairly carbon intensive sector base in manufacturing and agriculture and emerging strengths in environmental technologies.¹
- A.2 In July 2021, The Marches LEP published their [Economy Recovery Plan](#). The plan highlights the changing skills landscape as the area recovers from the COVID-19 crisis and notes expected challenges of the end of the UK Government Coronavirus Job Retention (furlough) scheme. This includes the need to train, re-skill and redeploy people who have been made redundant.
- A.3 The Core Indicators generally accord with local intelligence concerning the local economic landscape. The slightly lower proportion of Marches residents with NVQ Level 4+ qualifications is reflected both in Skills Demand indicators as well as the [SEP Evidence Base](#) (2018) which highlights the need within the area for more technical training of a higher level.
- A.4 There are some differences in the local landscape between the local authorities. For example, employment opportunities are spread unevenly within the LEP area. This has been reflected both in consultation, and through a local-authority view of the Core Indicators such as employment rates which vary considerably within the LEP area.

¹ The Marches LEP, Strategic Economic Plan, 2019

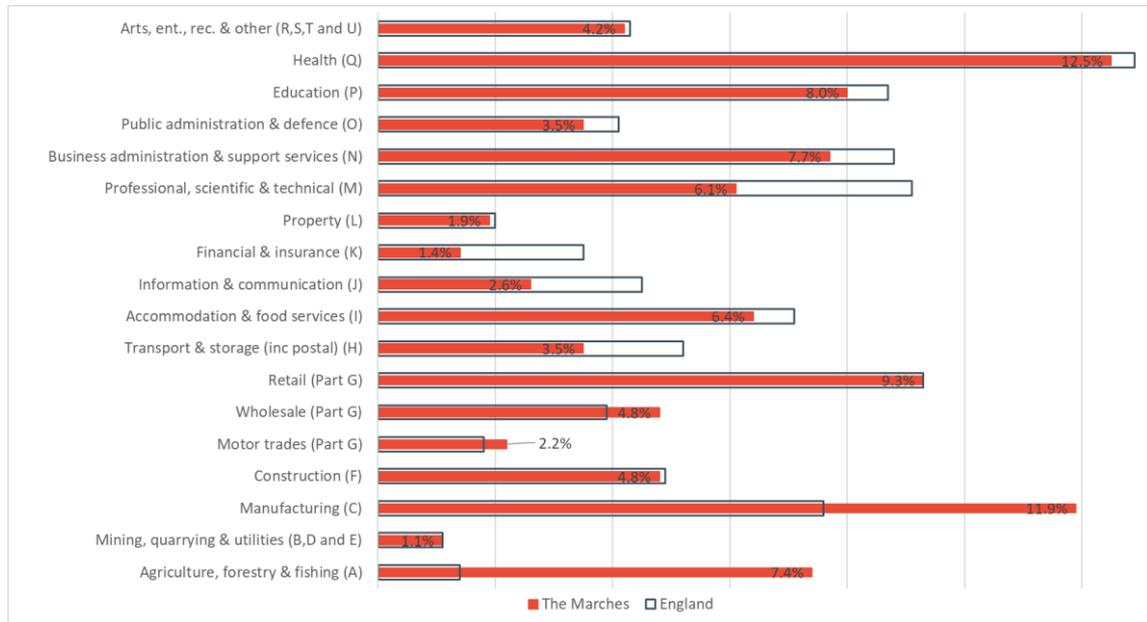
- A.5 Updated examples of how national and local policies and interventions have impacted the Marches skills landscape are provided in the Local Skills Report 2022 Chapters 6 and 7. The influence and strategic oversight of the LEP and SAP has clearly supported improved partnership working between employers and skills providers and funding has enabled interventions which respond to priority skills challenges. Chapter 5 notes progress against the skills action plan outlined in the 2021 Local Skills Report.
- A.6 The labour market performance of the Marches is strong; it has a higher employment rate relative to England and fewer people claiming work-related benefits as a proportion of the working-age population. However, the number of job vacancies have significantly increased from February to December 2021, likely as a repercussion of national COVID-19 restrictions in November 2020 and January 2021.
- A.7 The skills performance of the Marches is based more in intermediate and trade-apprenticeship qualifications than the higher and degree-level qualifications reflected in the national average. Furthermore, there is generally less progression to tertiary education at school leaving-age. This in the past has often led to gainful employment, but levels of workplace-based learning and apprenticeship uptake suggest too few young people are choosing this route to get the training they need to succeed.
- A.8 The Marches fits into the hierarchy of UK statistical geography, so can be compared to various UK benchmarks. International comparison at the European level would be possible through an approximation to NUTS geography.

Employment by sector

- A.9 The main sectors of employment in the Marches are Health, Manufacturing, and Retail, whilst Accommodation and Food and Agriculture are also prominent. Agriculture, manufacturing, motor trades, and wholesale are all relatively specialised in the Marches with location quotients of 1.2 or above. The most significant of these sectors is Agriculture which is more than 5.3 times specialised in the Marches than England².

² Location quotients calculated from within the SAP Core Indicators – Employment by Sector (BRES), 2019

Figure A.1 Employment by Sector, The Marches LEP area, 2020



Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, 2020

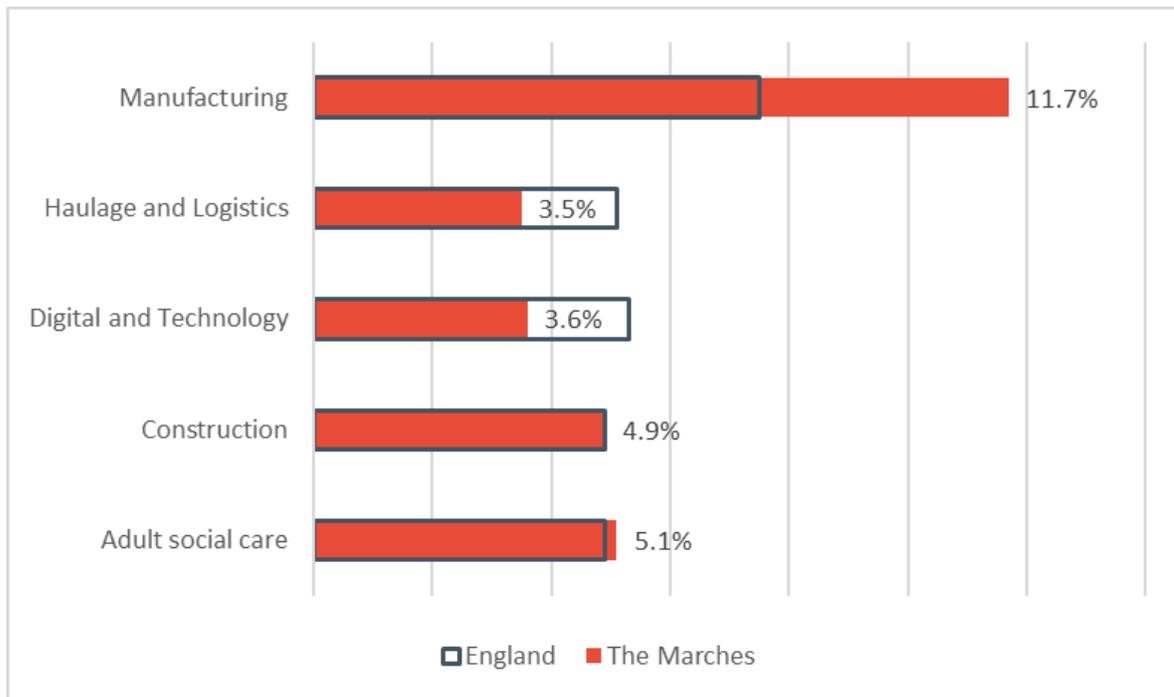
- A.10 Health and Social Care, Retail and the Visitor Economy (which includes the accommodation and food sector) are named as enabling sectors in the Marches Strategic Economic Plan³ due to their high employment and the vital services they provide for the economy. The advanced manufacturing sector (which overlaps with general manufacturing) and food and drink sector (including elements of the agriculture sector) are identified as Core Economic sectors given their high employment and high value. The related sectors of agri-tech, environmental technology is also listed as an emerging sector. Employment in the health sector has seen an increase of 0.5 percentage points from 2019 to 2020, overtaking manufacturing as the largest sector of employment which contracted by 1 percentage point.
- A.11 Although more analysis will be needed of the impact of COVID-19 on various sectors in the Marches, partners consulted ahead of the 2021 Local Skills Report reported that they were expecting a mixed picture to emerge. Throughout the UK, agricultural activities have been stable while other sectors have faced difficulties. Although restrictions have been less stringent throughout the second half of 2021 there continues to be a strain on sectors such those in the visitor economy and business facing sectors such as manufacturing industries which have seen reduced demand from some clients. As shown by the increase in employment in the sector, demand for health and social care skills has also increased since 2019. The Marches' ageing population continues to drive this demand and recruitment to vacancies within the sector remains challenging. Healthcare assistants and care assistants are amongst the top five most common job titles in job adverts posted in the Marches in 2021⁴.

³ The Marches LEP, Strategic Economic Plan, 2019

⁴ Emsi, Job Posting Analytics, January 2022

A.12 Of the five UK government priority sectors outlined in the Department for Education Local Skills Report Guidance 2021, the manufacturing industry is the most prominent making up 11.7% of total jobs in the Marches. This is significantly more than the proportion of jobs in England. Adult social care (5.1%) and construction (4.9%) make up similar proportions of total Marches employment as in wider England. The haulage and logistics (3.5%) and digital and technology sectors (3.6%) make up significantly lower proportions of employment in the Marches than in England.

Figure A.2 Employment by Priority Sector, 2020



Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, 2020

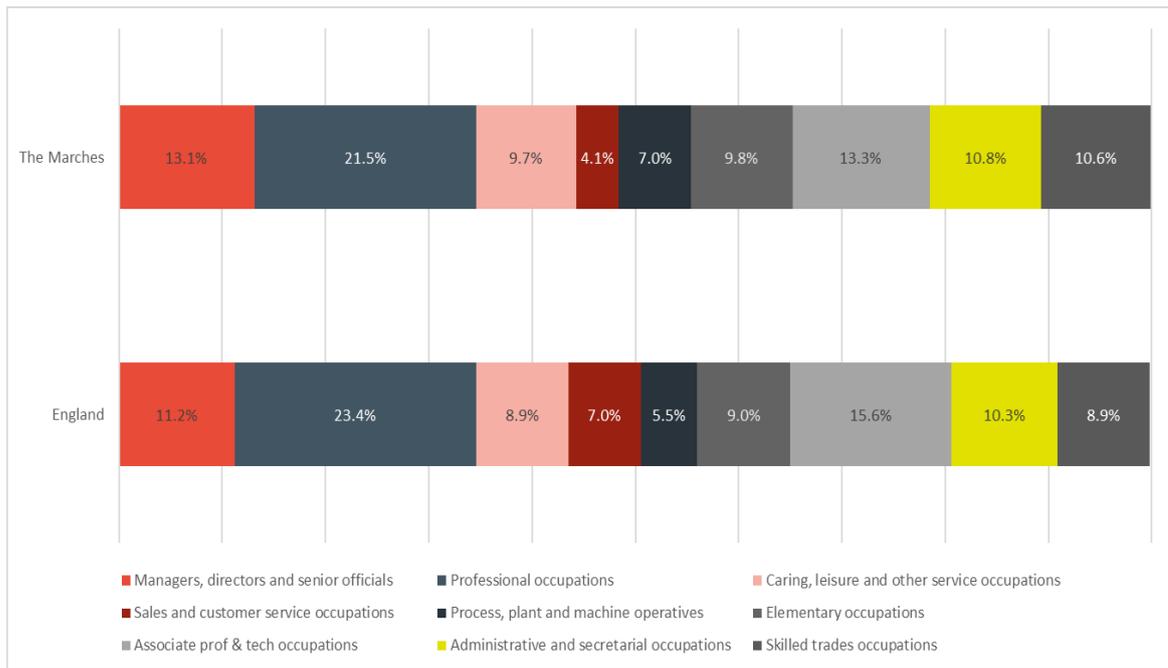
Employment by occupation

A.13 The main occupations of employment in The Marches are Professional occupations (21.5% of all jobs), followed by Associate Professional occupations (13.3%). Managers, Directors and Senior Officials as well as Skilled Trades make up a further 13.1% each. This suggests a fairly balanced spread of occupations in the labour market. Compared to England, higher skilled occupations make up a slightly smaller proportion of total jobs (-2%)⁵.

A.14 The COVID-19 crisis has required more people to work from home and spend more time in their local area. This might encourage more urban to rural migration as people seek to continue to work remotely. The Marches is well placed to capitalise on this trend by promoting its outdoor landscape, school provision and leisure offer to help attract higher skilled workers to the area and encourage business investment.

⁵ Higher skilled occupations are defined here as managers, directors and senior officials, professional occupations and associate professional and tech occupations.

Figure A.3 Occupations by area, 2021



Source: Annual Population Survey, July 2020 – June 2021

A.15 Across The Marches the split of occupations is similar in Herefordshire and Shropshire. Telford & Wrekin has a higher proportion of jobs in elementary occupations (13.2% vs 9.8% in the Marches) and a lower proportion of Managers, Directors and Senior Officials (9.1% vs 13.1% respectively).

Figure A.4 Occupations by area, 2021



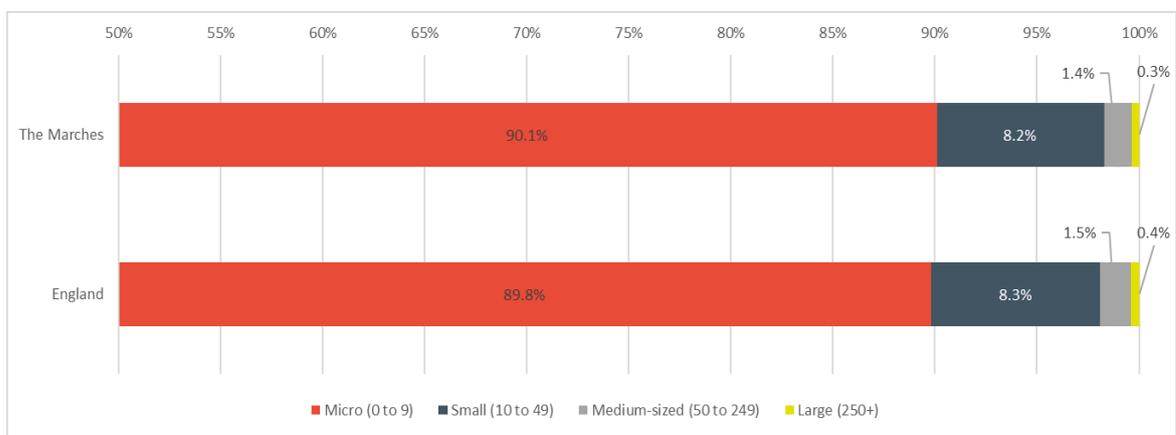
Source: Annual Population Survey, July 2020– June 2021

Enterprises by employment size band

A.16 The business size profile in the Marches is similar to England, with a predominantly micro and small-sized base.

A.17 While the challenge is not unique to the Marches, the significant number of small businesses makes it difficult for the SAP to engage with a broad range of employers. This is particularly challenging given the large geographic spread of the area. The SAP engages with the business base via business groups and networks such as the business boards, the Federation of Small Businesses and the local Chambers of Commerce. SAP members note that collaboration with small businesses has been particularly difficult throughout the pandemic as businesses are focused on survival and their time is even more limited than usual. However, the move to online events has provided different opportunities for business engagement and facilitated new approaches to personal and professional development across the Marches' 2,300 square mile geography. For example, peer learning has been successfully delivered through a virtual Marches-wide programme⁶. An example of this activity is provided on the [Marches Growth Hub website](#).

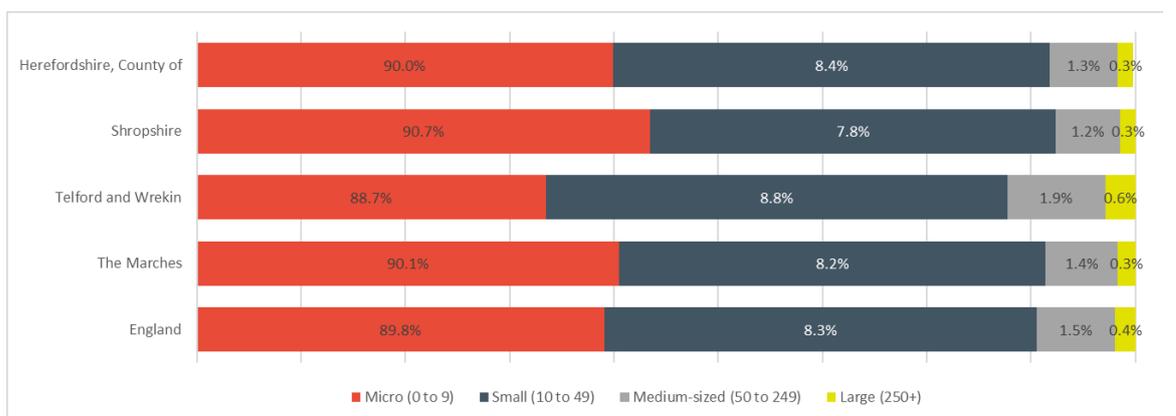
Figure A.5 Business size, 2021



Source: UK Business Counts, 2021

A.18 The business size profile in all three areas in the Marches is similar to England, with a predominantly micro and small-sized base. Telford & Wrekin has a slightly larger proportion of small, medium and large businesses compared to the other Local Authority areas.

Figure A.6 Business size, 2021



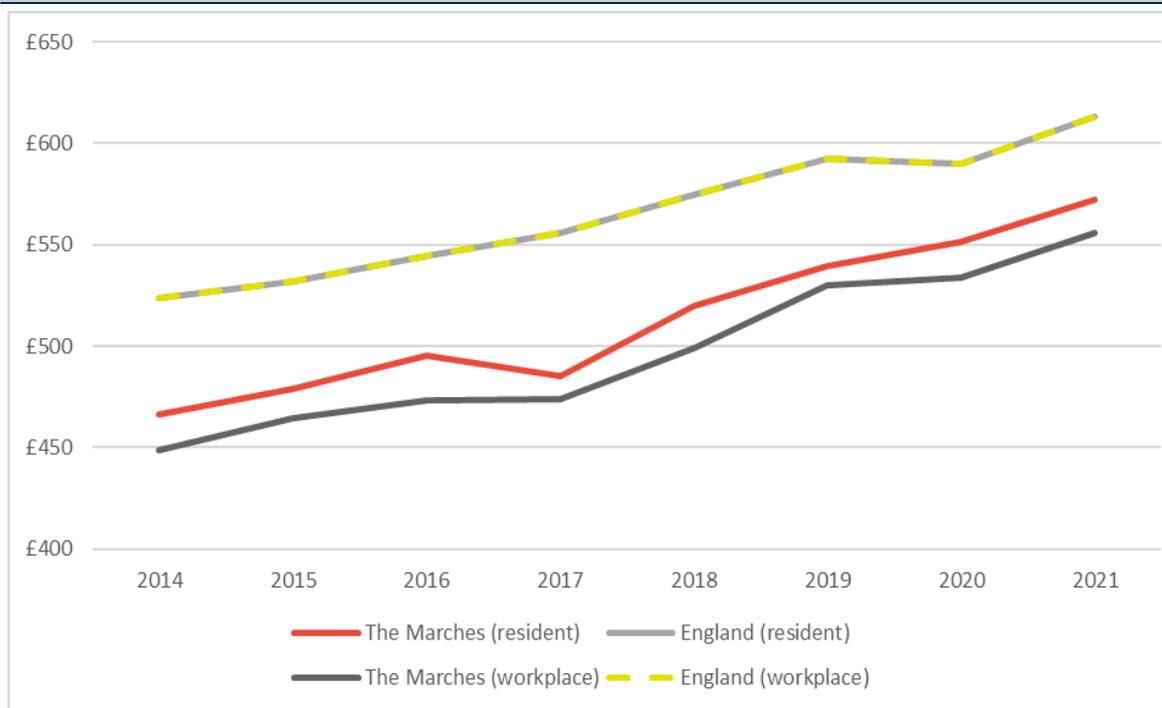
Source: UK Business Counts, 2021

⁶ Marches Growth Hub website, [Marketing company recruits new faces after Peer Network support](#)

Median gross weekly wage for full-time workers

- A.19 Resident and workplace wages have grown 23% and 24% respectively between 2014 and 2021 in the Marches, outpacing the 17% for resident and workplace of England’s wage growth. However, wages in the Marches have grown from a lower base than England, and wages remain below the national average.
- A.20 Resident wages are approximately 1% higher than workplace wages in the Marches, suggesting that jobs are paid slightly better outside of the LEP area. This is in part related to the historic make-up of the Marches economy, around the traditionally lower paid agricultural sector and lower numbers of large employers. The Marches Draft Local Industrial Strategy evidence base finds that a high number of Marches residents commute to urban areas of the West Midlands for work, particularly Wolverhampton, Birmingham and Dudley.

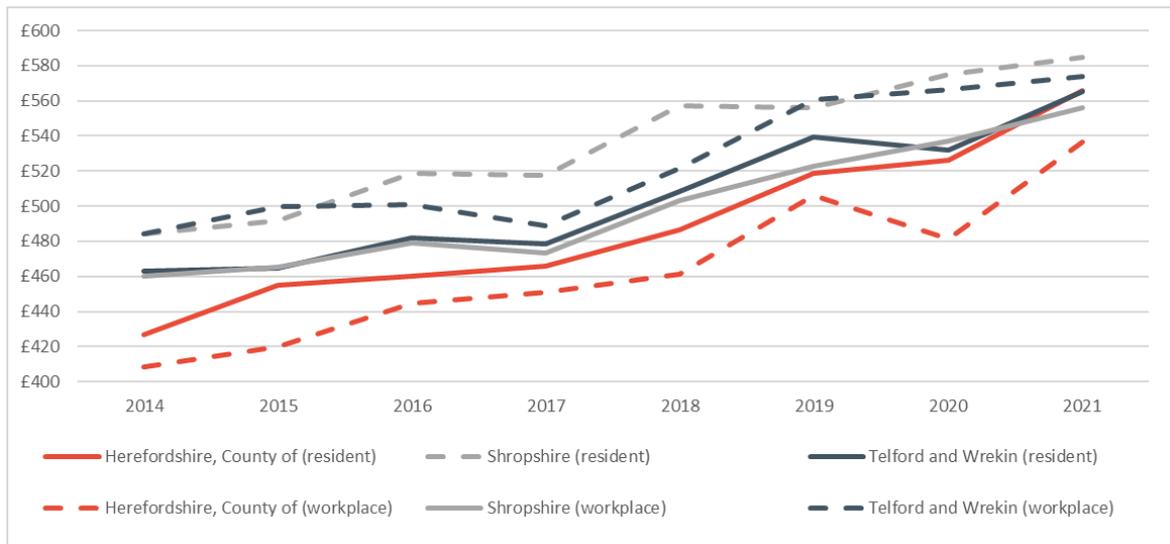
Figure A.7 Median gross weekly wages (resident and workplace), Marches LEP and England



Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2014 - 2021

- A.21 Of the three Marches LEP local authorities, Shropshire has the highest resident earnings, whilst Telford & Wrekin has the highest workplace earnings. Workplace earnings in Herefordshire are particularly low compared to the rest of the Marches. Of the three areas within the Marches, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin saw similar growth in resident earnings of 21% and 22% whereas Herefordshire saw significantly higher growth of 33%. However, Herefordshire had a significantly lower wage in 2014 of £426 per week compared to £484 in Shropshire and £463 in Telford and Wrekin. As of 2021 Herefordshire and Telford & Wrekin have the same resident wage of £565 with Shropshire remaining the highest at £584.
- A.22 There is a similar pattern for workplace wages with Herefordshire seeing significant growth of 31% compared to 21% Shropshire and 18% Telford & Wrekin. Overall, all areas within the Marches have lower wages than the England average for both resident and workplace earnings for all years during 2014-2021.

Figure A.8 Median gross weekly wages (resident and workplace)



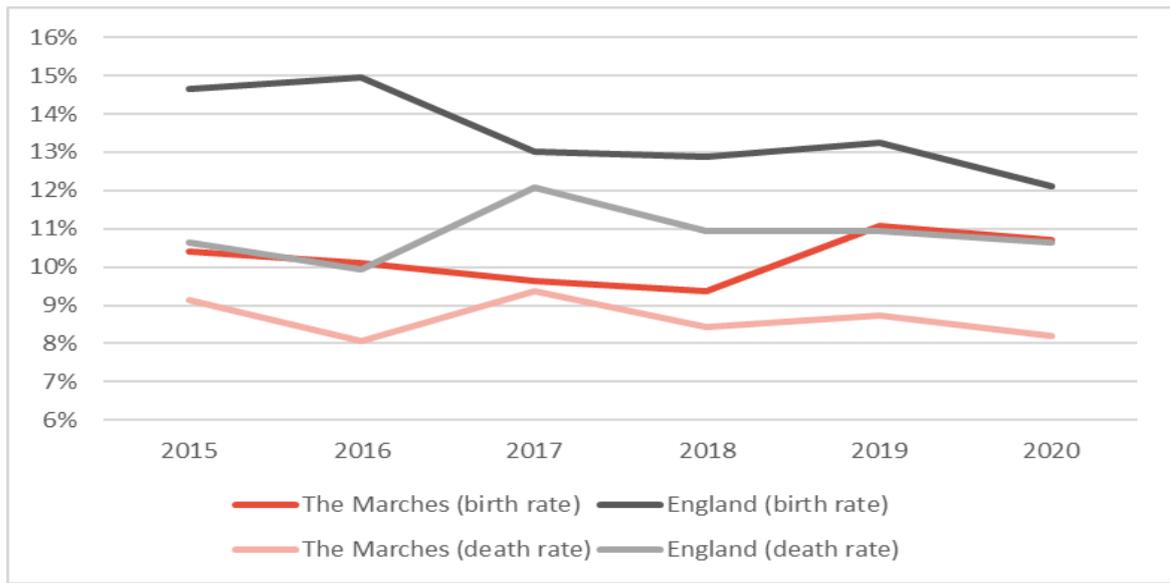
Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2014 - 2021

Business birth and death rates

- A.23 The business births and business death rates have remained fairly stable between 2015 and 2020. They show a slight improvement with a less than 1% increase in the business birth rate since 2015 and a 1% decrease in the business death rate. In England the birth rate decreased by approximately 3% and there was no change in the business death rate.
- A.24 The pandemic’s impact on business demography in the Marches is reflected in Natwest’s West Midlands Business Activity Index⁷ which indicates that growth slowed at the end of 2021 as the latest variant heightened uncertainty, leading to staff shortages and postponed purchasing.

⁷ NatWest, West Midlands PMI: December 2021, January 2022

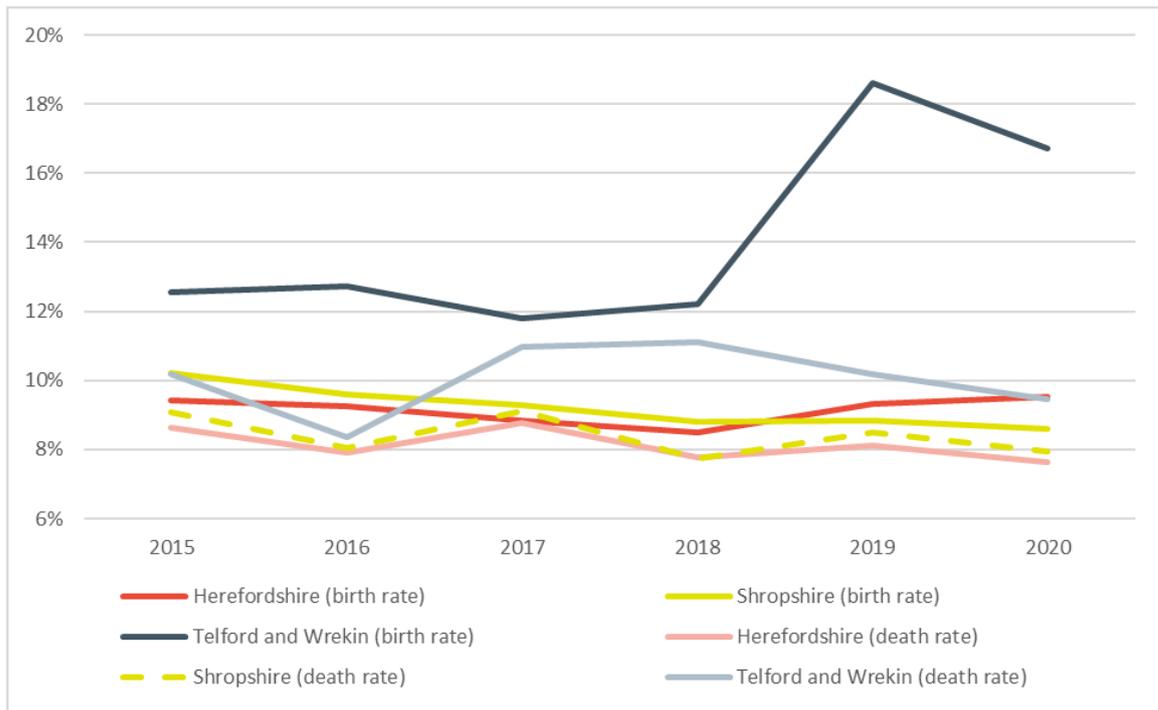
Figure A.9 Business birth and death rates, 2015-20



Source: ONS Business Demography, 2015 - 2020 (published 2020)

- A.25 The Draft Local Industrial Strategy evidence base suggests that the Marches had good business survival rates pre-COVID-19 compared to similar LEP areas (Greater Lincolnshire and Heart of the South West), albeit with lower than average birth and death rates. The Marches Economic Recovery plan reports that 16.8% of Marches businesses were temporarily closed in January 2021 as a result of national lockdown measures. This compares well to England as a whole where 17.5% of businesses were temporarily closed. However, Telford & Wrekin had slightly more temporary closures with 17.6% of businesses affected.
- A.26 Between 2015 and 2020, the business birth rate has increased the most in Telford & Wrekin at approximately 4%, with Shropshire seeing a -2% change and Herefordshire seeing no change between the same period. Business deaths have decreased by 1% for all three areas within the Marches. This may suggest Telford & Wrekin has a more competitive business environment compared to other areas within the Marches.

Figure A.10 Business birth and death rates, 2015-20

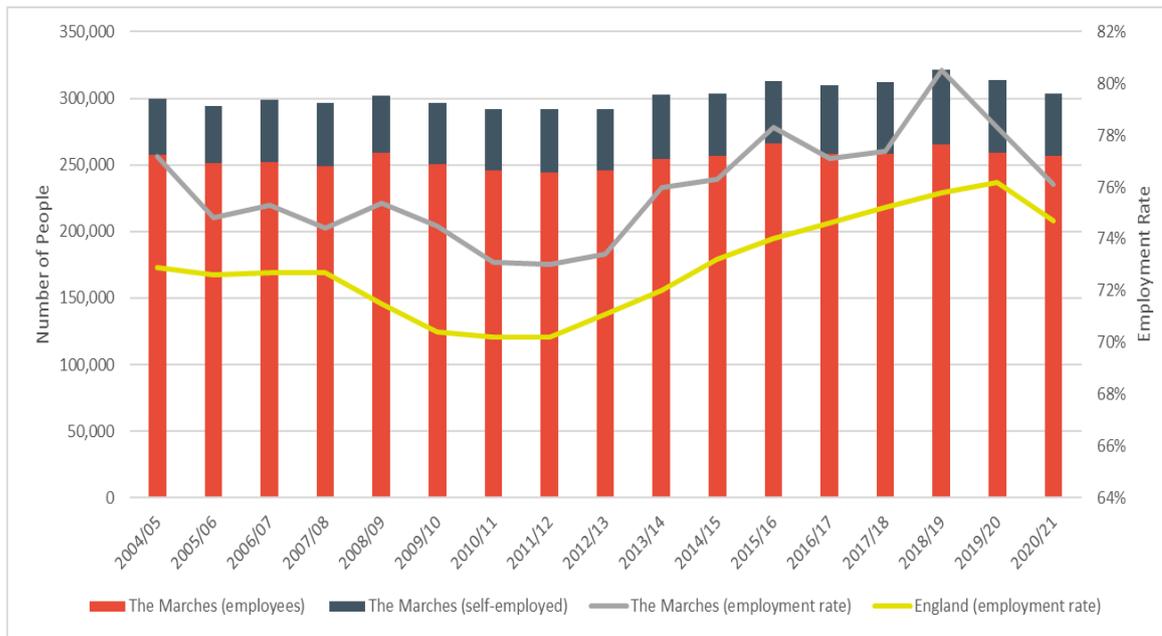


Source: ONS Business Demography, 2015 - 2020 (published 2020)

Employment rate and level

- A.27 The Marches reached its lowest employment level since 2004 following the Great Recession, at a rate of 73% in 2011. It then grew consistently to 2016 to 80%, and then fell through to 2020 to 76%.
- A.28 The Marches has a slightly higher proportion of self-employed people than England (12% vs 10%). Within the Marches, Herefordshire has the highest proportion with 15%, followed by Shropshire (14%) and Telford & Wrekin (5%).
- A.29 The Draft Local Industrial Strategy evidence base finds on the whole the Marches has had higher levels of economic activity than the UK average. However, this is not uniform across the LEP as Telford & Wrekin has lower levels of economic activity.
- A.30 The 2021 Local Skills Report noted that, as the Marches has a high proportion of older workers, there is a risk that any older workers or workers with caring responsibilities who become out of work as an impact of COVID-19 will become economically inactive. Annual population survey data shows that since 2019/20 the economic inactivity rate has increased above national levels in the Marches. Economic inactivity has increased by three percentage points in the Marches, compared to just one percentage point in England. Recent data shows economic activity in the Marches has actually fallen amongst people aged over 50 (-0.3 p.p) and the greatest increase has been experienced by 16 to 24 year olds (+3.8 p.p).

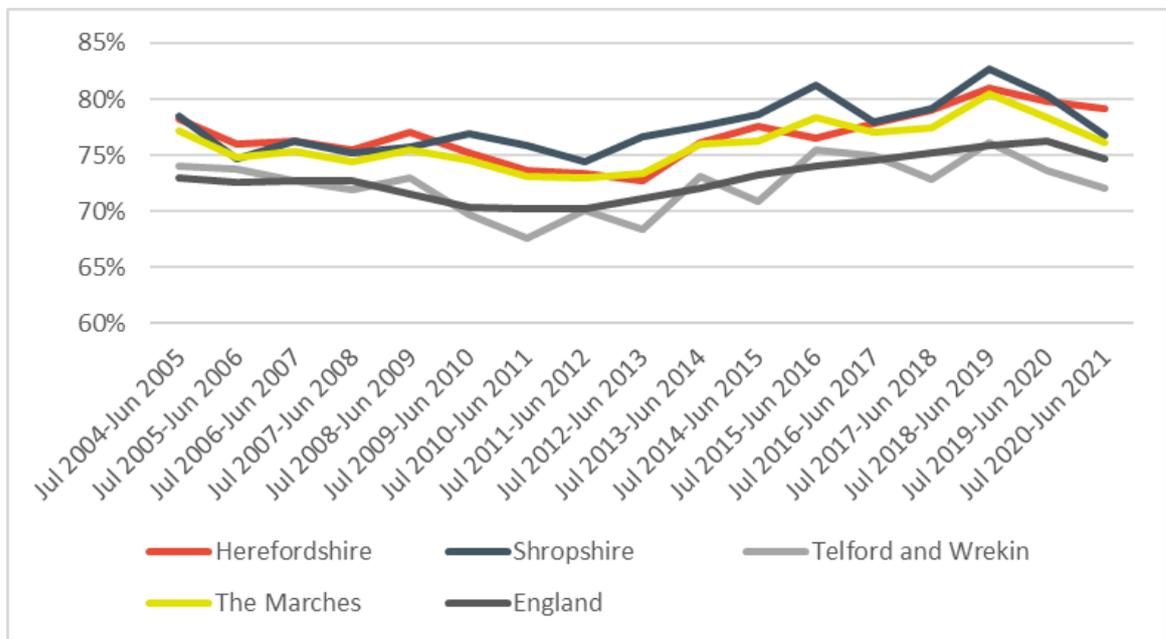
Figure A.11 Employment rate (right axis) and employment level (left axis)



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2004/05 – 2020/21

A.31 Within the Marches, there is significant variation in the employment rate, with Telford & Wrekin having a consistently lower rate (75% or less) than Herefordshire and Shropshire, whose rates fluctuate above 75% over the period 2004-2021, peaking in the low-mid 80s towards the end of the past decade.

Figure A.12 Employment rate

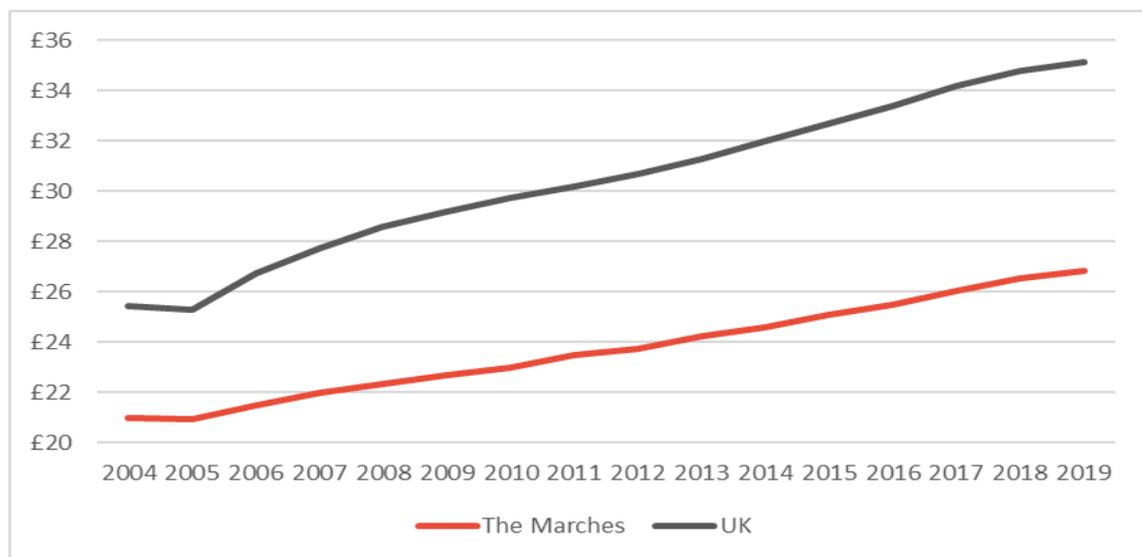


Source: Annual Population Survey, 2005 - 2021

Nominal GVA per hour worked

- A.32 Productivity is persistently lower in the Marches than the UK. Productivity levels have also grown slower in the Marches (+28%) than the UK (+38%) from 2004-2019.
- A.33 Lower productivity is reflected in lower pay in the Marches. The Draft Local Industrial Strategy evidence base finds that Marches median gross annual pay is lower than the regional average at £26,000 compared to £29,600 in the UK. Annual pay also varies by local authority with a lower Herefordshire average of £23,900. The Marches also has a higher share of earnings below the Real Living Wage for the Marches than the national and regional averages.
- A.34 The largest single sector in the Marches is manufacturing, which was worth £2.2bn in 2018. Other large contributors to GVA are the clusters of wholesale, retail, transport, accommodation, and food (£2.9bn in 2018) and health, education, public administration and social security/social work (£2.5bn).

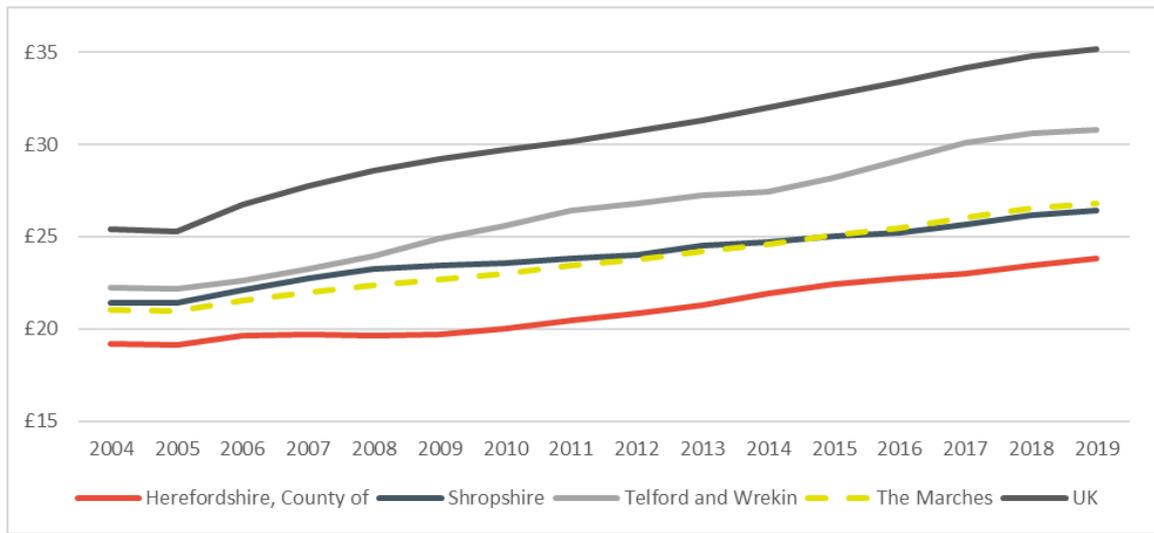
Figure A.13 GVA (£) per hour worked



Source: ONS Subregional Productivity, 2004 - 2019 (published 2021)

- A.35 Amongst the Marches local authorities, Telford & Wrekin performs particularly well for productivity with growth of 39% between 2004-2019, in line with UK levels (39%) reflecting fast growth since 2013. Productivity in Shropshire was mostly in line with the Marches average and Herefordshire generates the lowest productivity between 2004-2019.

Figure A.14 GVA (£) per hour worked

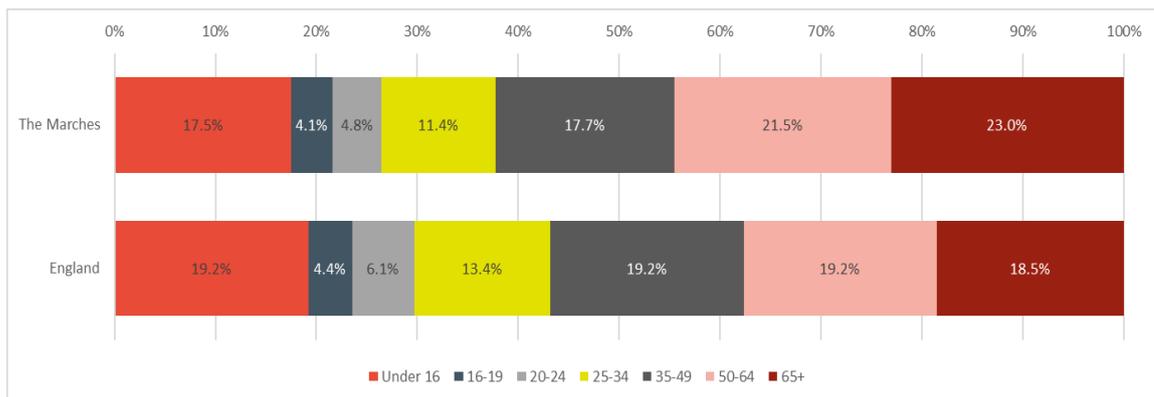


Source: ONS Subregional Productivity, 2005 - 2019 (published 2020)

Population by age group

- A.36 The Marches population is slightly older than that of England, with higher proportions of people aged 50-64 and 65+ (45% over age of 50) than England (38% over age of 50). This gap has widened over time. In 2010, 39% of the Marches population were aged 50+, compared to 34% for England. This suggests the Marches population is ageing more rapidly than England.
- A.37 The rapidly growing elderly population in the Marches may present challenges to the labour market in the form of labour shortages, particularly as demand in certain sectors like health and social care will likely increase as the population ages.

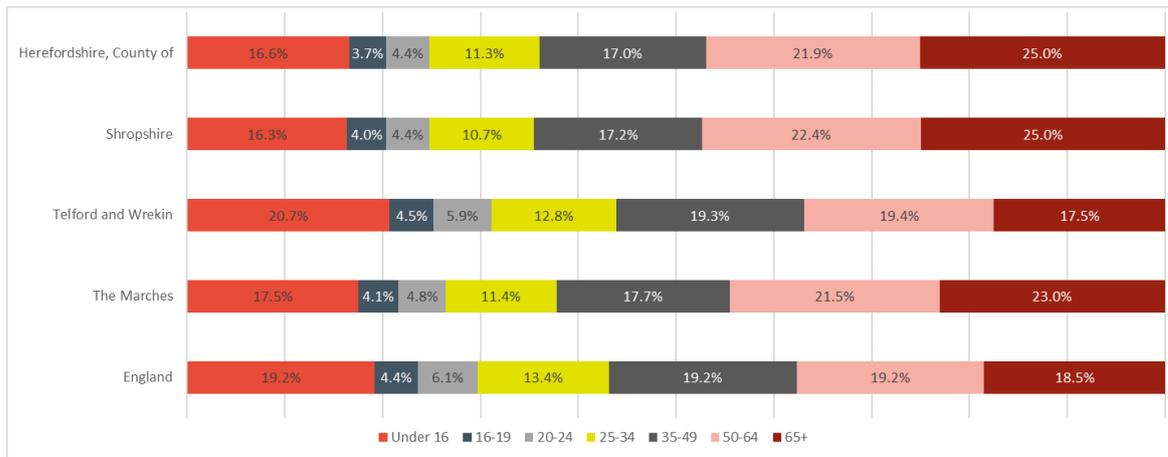
Figure A.15 Population by age, 2020



Source: ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2020

- A.38 All areas within The Marches are in line with England, showing greatest portion of the population being 50+.

Figure A.16 Population by age, 2020

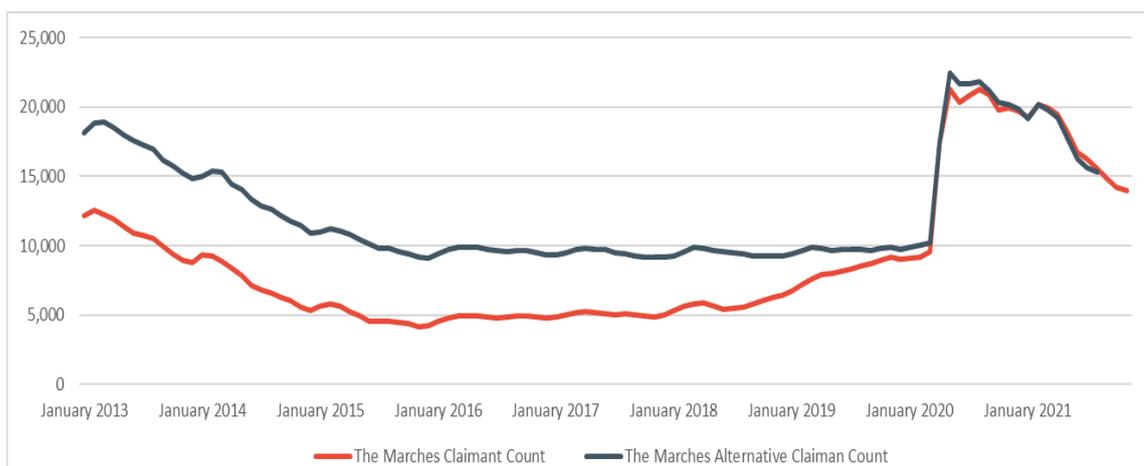


Source: ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2020

Claimant Count and Alternative Claimant Count

- A.39 In the Marches, the claimant count declined between 2013-15, where it then remained at a stable low until increasing in 2020 following the pandemic. When the claimant count is expressed as a percentage of the working-age population, it can be seen that the Marches has a lower relative claimant count than England, showing a consistent gap of approximately 1% since 2013. Since the onset of COVID-19, the claimant count in the Marches has increased by approximately 3 percentage points, similar to England.
- A.40 From March 2020 to April 2020 there was a significant increase in the claimant rate from 2.3 to 4.2 which reflects the onset of the pandemic. The claimant count reached a high of 5.1 in August 2020 and then slowly declined to 3.4 in November 2021 (14,000 claimants). Although significantly lower, the claimant count has not yet returned to its pre Covid-19 rate.

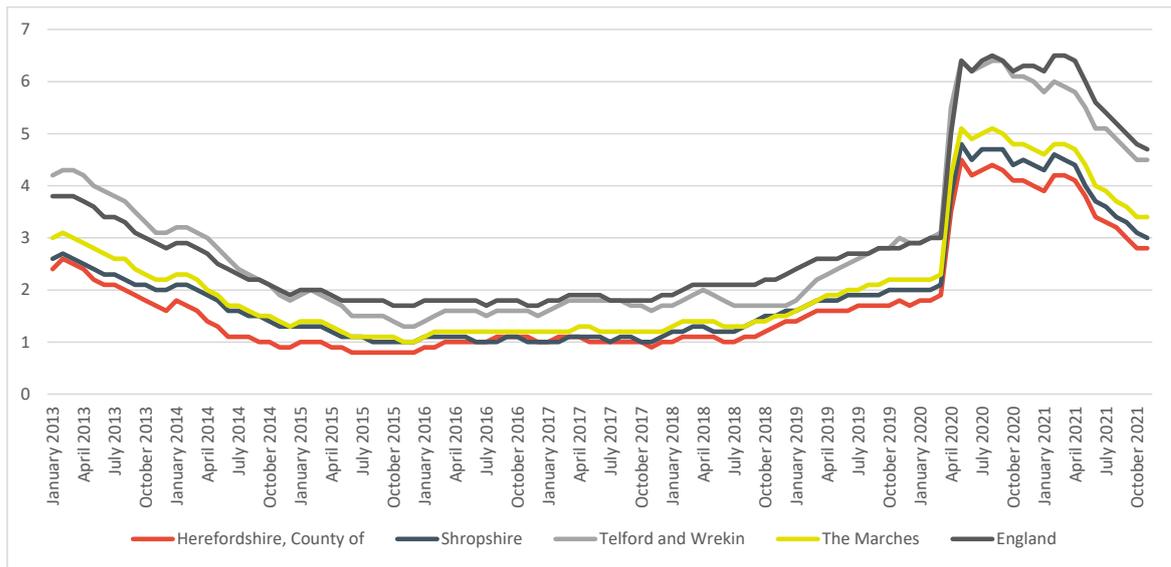
Figure A.17 Claimant count and alternative claimant count – The Marches



Source: ONS claimant count & DWP Stat Xplore, January 2013 – January 2021

A.41 Herefordshire and Shropshire have a significantly lower proportion of the working age population who are claimants of 2.8% and 3.0% as of November 2021 compared 4.7% of the working age population in England. Telford & Wrekin’s claimant count is significantly higher than other areas within the Marches at 4.5%. Since 2020, the proportion of claimants in all areas within the Marches have remained below England.

Figure A.18 Claimant count and alternative claimant count as a proportion of working age people – The Marches

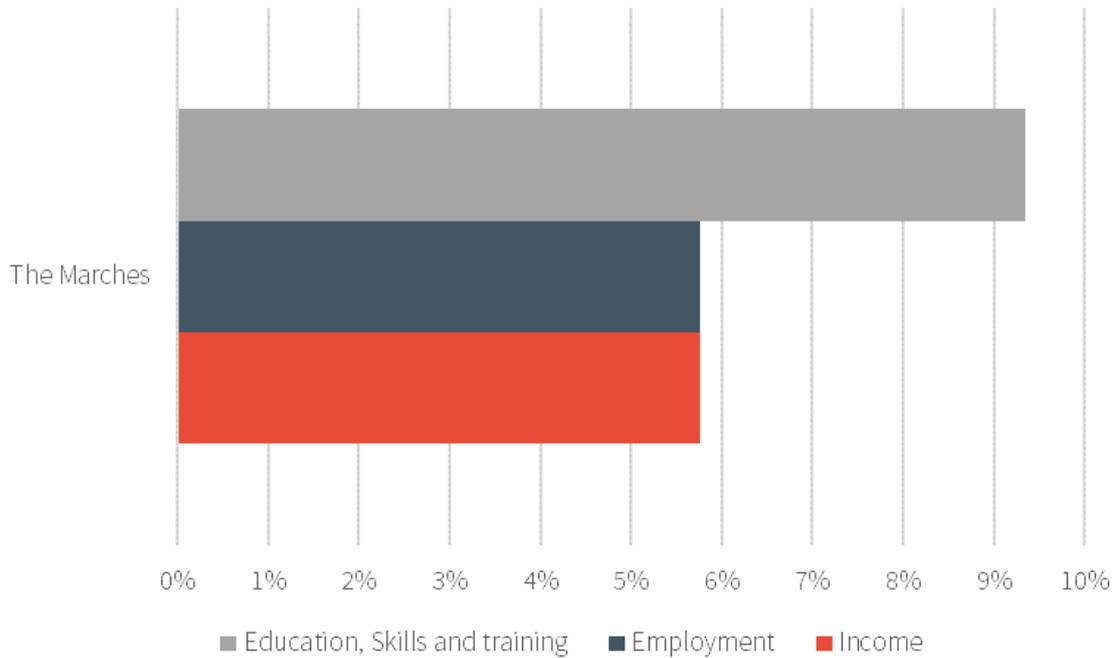


Source – ONS Claimant Count, January 2013 – October 2021

Income, Employment and Education deprivation

- A.42 The Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that 9% of neighbourhoods (LSOAs) in the Marches LEP area are in the top decile (i.e. most deprived) for education, skills and training deprivation nationally. Also, 6% of neighbourhoods in the LEP area are in the top decile for employment and income deprivation nationally.
- A.43 Within the Marches, Telford & Wrekin experiences by far the most deprivation, with at least 18% of all neighbourhoods being in the top deciles for deprivation in education, employment and income.
- A.44 Whilst Shropshire and Herefordshire experience relatively low employment and income deprivation, 6%+ of neighbourhoods in these areas are in the top decile for deprivation in education, skills and training, suggesting skills as an acute area of need within the Marches LEP area.

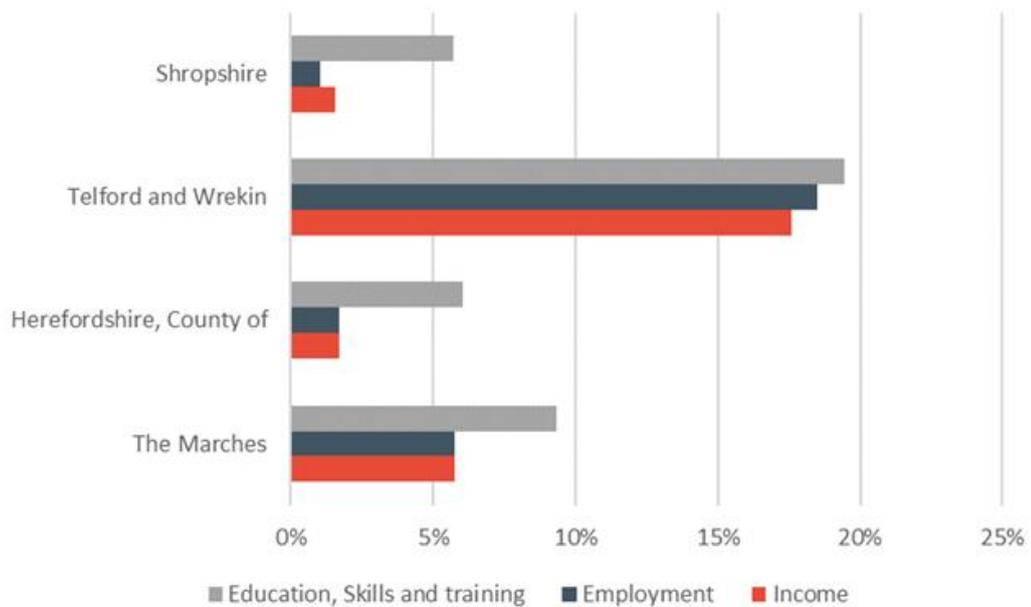
Figure A.19 Proportion of neighbourhoods in 10% most deprived nationally



Source: Index of Multiple Deprivation, MHCLG, 2019, 2017 LEP boundaries

A.45 Within the Marches, Telford & Wrekin experiences a high proportion of neighbourhoods which are within the 10% most deprived in England in terms of education, skills and training, employment and income. The index of deprivation shows that the highest proportion of neighbourhoods in all three of the Marches LEP Local Authorities are within the top 10% most deprived in skills, education and training.

Figure A.20 Proportion of neighbourhoods in 10% most deprived nationally



Source: Index of Multiple Deprivation, MHCLG, 2019, 2017 LEP boundaries

Skills Supply

Skills Supply – Summary

In the most recent academic year ending 2021, the Marches had 8,540 (compared to 9,155 for the year ending 2020) Further Education achievements, 2,380 Apprenticeship achievements, (compared to 2,594 2020) and 920 Higher Education qualifiers (1,150 2020). As such, FE is, by a substantial margin, the largest basis of provision in the Marches, and apprenticeships more than double HE qualifiers.

Key challenges and opportunities in the skills pipeline for the Marches are set out below. These challenges and opportunities are both evident from the Core Indicators as well as reflect the experience of SAP members.

Challenges:

- Fewer residents with degree-level qualifications than England
- Relatively unbalanced profile of HE qualifiers (predominantly agriculture)
- Generally lower progression through education after 16-18 years old than national average
- Lower % of level 4 apprenticeships leading to jobs in the Marches
- Low graduate retention

Opportunities:

- Relatively small proportion of residents with no qualifications
- Further education attainments in high value-added subjects like health and business
- High apprenticeship completions in manufacturing, aligned to sector base
- Graduates from the Marches more likely than national average to enter sustained employment

A.46 There are three FE colleges and a specialist college of Arts who account for the LEP's FE provision:

- Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College
- Telford College
- Shrewsbury Colleges Group
- Hereford College of Arts

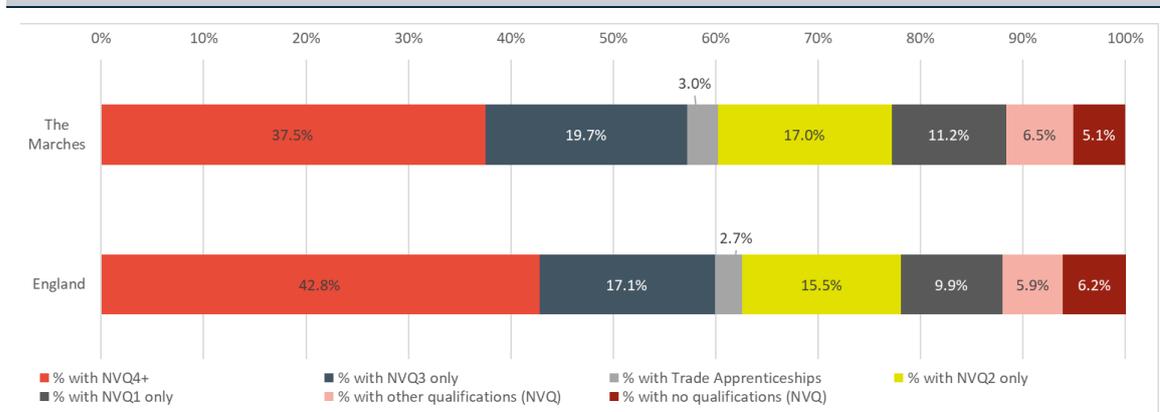
A.47 These are in addition to the growing HE presence in the Marches which comprises Harper Adams University, University Centre Shrewsbury, University of Wolverhampton's Telford campus and the new NMITE institution in Hereford. This relatively small number of FE and HE providers within the LEP, should make collaboration between sectors somewhat easier and this is encouraged by the SAP.

- A.48 The nature of the HE provision presents some challenges around data collection, i.e., it has not been possible to separate out data for the University of Wolverhampton's Telford campus; University Centre Shrewsbury is part of the University of Chester and NMITE's provision is new. This means that Higher Education data for the Marches only covers Harper Adams University currently. This is an area of work currently being reviewed by the SAP.
- A.49 Concerning the impact of COVID-19, consultations led by Hatch when drafting the 2021 Local Skills Report for the Marches LEP ascertained that COVID had had a massive interruption to learning on campus and many students were eager to get back to face-to-face teaching. However, there is little evidence regarding how well students have managed to take advantage of online learning.
- A.50 Despite significant disruption, consultations reported that the necessary switch to online learning has forced providers into innovating their offer in beneficial ways – such as reaching more remote rural communities or reaching learners who juggle responsibilities such as child or adult care. Hatch's consultations suggested that the FE colleges have progressed more with their use of online learning in 12 months than they had in the previous 25 years and were looking forward to maintaining the successful elements of what they have delivered. FE providers recognise that for rural areas remote learning can play an important role in helping learners who are juggling work and care responsibilities.
- A.51 Some concern was also registered that employers were sometimes not fully supportive of learners engaging with their college work during the lockdown as they might need to be, in part due to attendance being online. Another issue raised around work based learning is the difficulty of providing work placements given COVID restrictions.
- A.52 Recent anecdotal evidence suggests that FE colleges have encountered increased student intakes in the most recent academic year. This may, in part, result from students delaying entering a difficult employment market.
- A.53 Discussions with employers and skills providers undertaken in 2021 highlight that there is more to be done around the transferring of Apprenticeship Levies and in communicating apprenticeship supply and demand to maximise apprenticeship benefits. There is a particular need to ensure smaller businesses in the Marches are taking advantage of the benefits made available by the Apprenticeship Levy. Since the inclusion of sharing of the Apprenticeship Levy as an action in the 2021 Marches SAP Local Skills Report, the SAP has promoted a national approach to the Apprenticeship Levy. In addition, local providers continue to work with employers to build understanding of apprenticeship funding mechanisms including the levy, co-investment models and local and national incentives.
- A.54 The Marches has put in place provisions to ensure the labour force will have skills for current and future demand, including the undertaking of sector deep-dive studies to map skill needs and sector growth areas. In September 2021, the LEP published three new sector deep dives, reviewing the Hospitality, Catering and the Visitor Economy, Retail, and Transport Technologies. Findings of these studies have been considered within this Local Skills Report update. The Marches SAP has also established collaborative relationships between the local FE and HE providers and key employers. This collaboration will boost alignment in the long term between supply and demand for skills in the Marches. SAP investment in data analytical tools has also encouraged providers and partners to use an evidence-based approach to planning future provision.

Qualification levels

- A.55 In the Marches, there are a smaller proportion (38%) of people with degree-level NVQ4+ qualifications than in England (43%). However, there are also a smaller proportion of people with no qualifications (5.1% compared to 6.2% in England). The Marches has a slightly higher proportions of people with NVQ1, trade apprenticeships or 'other' types of qualifications than England.
- A.56 Since 2010, the qualifications profile of the Marches has shifted towards higher-level qualifications, similarly to England overall. For instance, the proportion of working-age residents with degree level qualifications in the Marches grew 10.3 percentage points (p.p.) between 2010 and 2020 (compared to 11.8 p.p. for England). The Marches has also seen a promising reduction in the proportion of people with no qualifications – down 6.6 p.p.

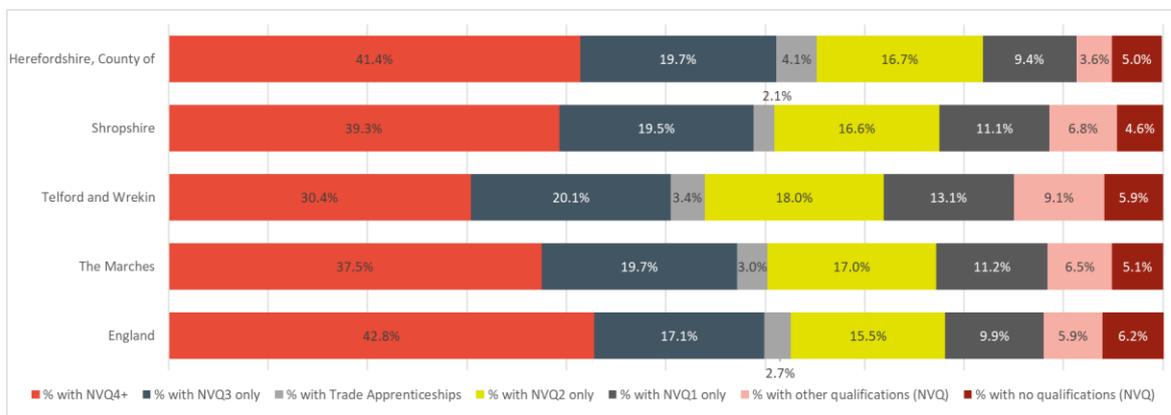
Figure A.21 Qualifications, 2020



Source: Annual Population Survey, January 2020 – December 2020

- A.57 The qualifications profile differs significantly within the Marches, with lower qualification levels in Telford & Wrekin.

Figure A.22 Qualifications, 2020



Source: Annual Population Survey, January 2020 – December 2020

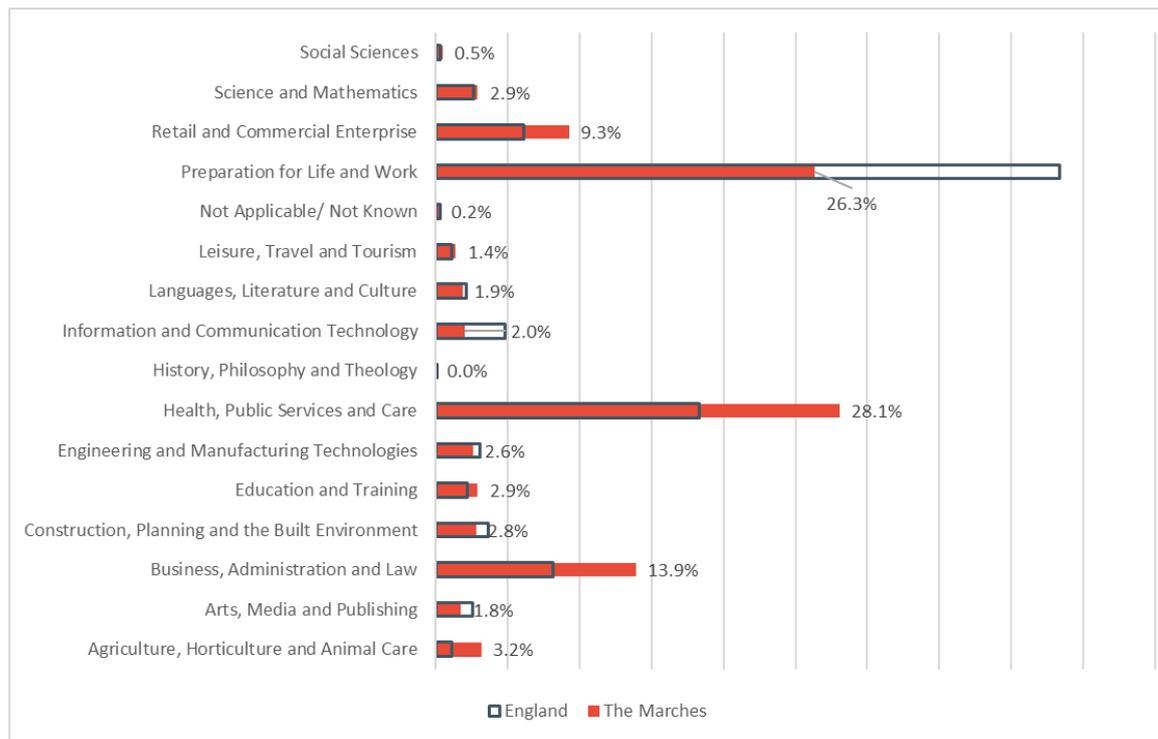
FE Education and Training Achievements

A.58 There are three FE colleges and a specialist college of Arts in the Marches who account for the LEP's FE provision:

- Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College
- Telford College
- Shrewsbury Colleges Group
- Hereford College of Arts

A.59 In the Marches, 28% of further education achievements are in Health, Public Services and Care, compared to 18% in England. In England, 43% of achievements are in Preparation for Life and Work, 5% lower than 2019/20 figures, whereas in the Marches this is just 26%, 3% lower than in 2019/20. Two subject areas where the Marches stands out from England - Health, Public Services and Care and Business and Law – are priority growth sectors as well as substantial bases of employment within the LEP.

Figure A.23 FE Achievements, 2020/21



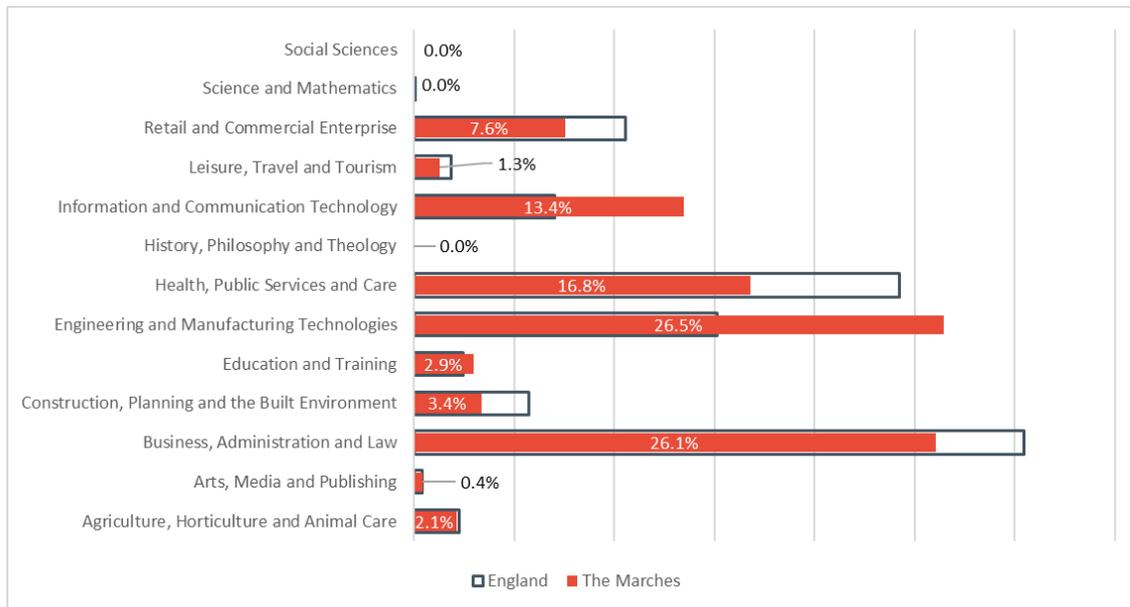
Source: Further Education & Skills data, DfE (published 2021)

Apprenticeship achievements

A.60 As Figure A.24 shows, apprenticeship achievements in the Marches are well represented in Engineering and Manufacturing, which accounts for 26% of apprenticeships (compared to 15% in England). The only other subject area better represented in the Marches than England is ICT, which accounts for 13% of Marches apprenticeship achievements (7% for England).

A.61 Some consultees consulted to inform the 2021 Local Skills Report highlighted (Annex B) potential for higher apprenticeship numbers in priority growth sectors, particularly at the higher level by better aligning supply and demand of apprenticeships (e.g. Annex B Skills Supply, Agri-tech).

Figure A.24 Apprenticeship achievements by sector subject area, 2021

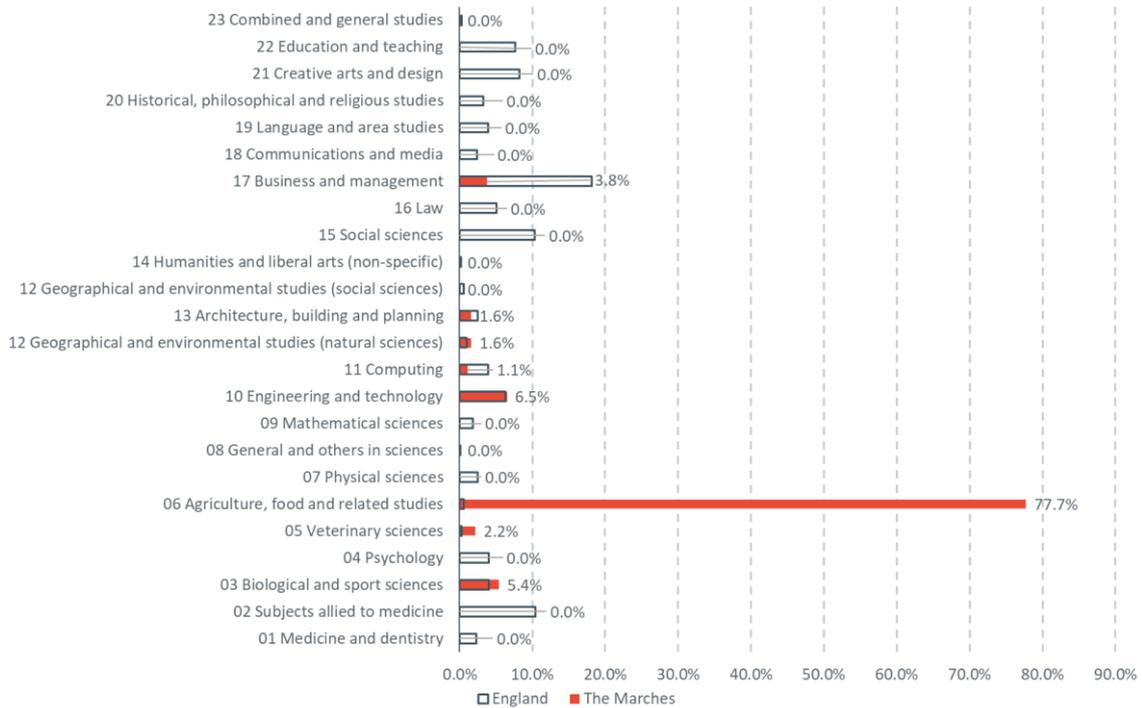


Source: Apprenticeships data, DfE (published 2021)

HE Qualifiers

A.62 Current data on HE qualification in the Marches reflects Harper Adams University graduates only, as other graduates qualify with institutions which have core bases outside of the Marches. As Harper Adams University is a national specialist institution in agricultural and animal sciences, the data shows that higher education qualifiers are overwhelmingly concentrated in Agriculture, accounting for 7% of qualifiers for the Marches (1% for England). Veterinary science accounts for a further 2% of HE qualifiers in the Marches, compared to England at (<1%). Although this is double in comparison to England, this is significantly lower than in 2020 (11%) despite the proportion in England remaining the same. Recent investment in Harper Adams facilities for veterinary sciences (described within Figure C.16) and higher than anticipated recruitment to the new Harper & Keele Veterinary School will drive these numbers in coming years.

Figure A.25 HE qualifiers by sector subject area, 2019/20



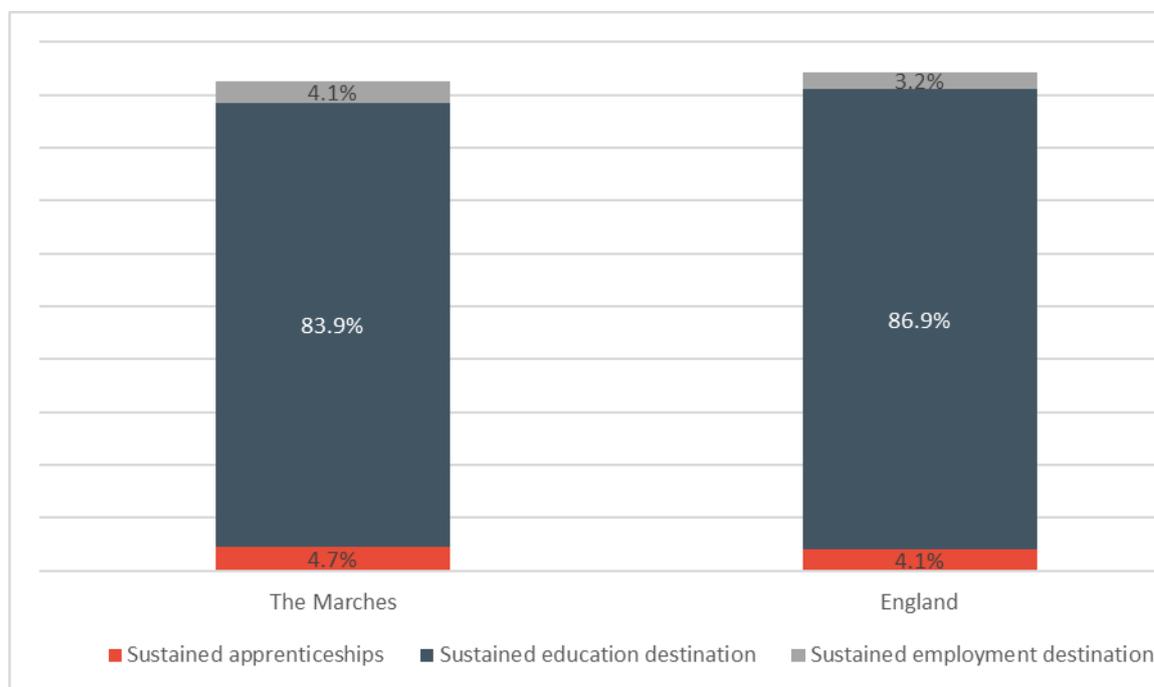
Source: HESA, 2019/2020 qualifiers (published 2021)

KS4 Destinations

- A.63 Destinations of KS4 students differ slightly between the Marches and England, with less than 1% of students going into apprenticeships, 1% more going into employment, with a corresponding 3% fewer students going into sustained education.
- A.64 Local intelligence suggests strong performing schools, with each Local Authority of the Marches above the national average for Attainment 8, Grades 5+ in Maths and English and average points score for the EBACC. This suggests that quality of KS4 education offer is not holding back progression through education after KS4.
- A.65 The 2019 [‘Closing the Gap’](#) report from the Careers and Enterprise Company, as well as anecdotal intelligence conveyed by Marches employers to Hatch in consultation for the 2021 Local Skills Report, suggested that insufficient work-experience opportunities were being made available to students within the LEP area. Whilst this may seem inconsequential given the quite high proportion of Marches students entering employment, a lack of such opportunities may prevent students from entering the *kinds* of employment they desire, or which would be most beneficial for the LEP area.
- A.66 The Marches Careers Hub, described in Figure C.18, now contributes to work readiness and the promotion of careers in priority sectors through engagement with schools and colleges. It encourages businesses to work with local educational institutions, to offer work experience placements and to promote local opportunities. This project has also encouraged local participation in virtual work experiences to maintain engagement with employers in spite of the pandemic and associated restrictions. Innovation is driving new approaches to enable interactions with employers including online talks, interactive videos and virtual careers fairs.

National good practice identified by the Careers and Enterprise Company⁸ has been built on locally, e.g. through the delivery of the Marches Careers Fair and through the development of employer videos for use with Marches- based schools.

Figure A.26 Key Stage 4 destinations - state-funded mainstream schools

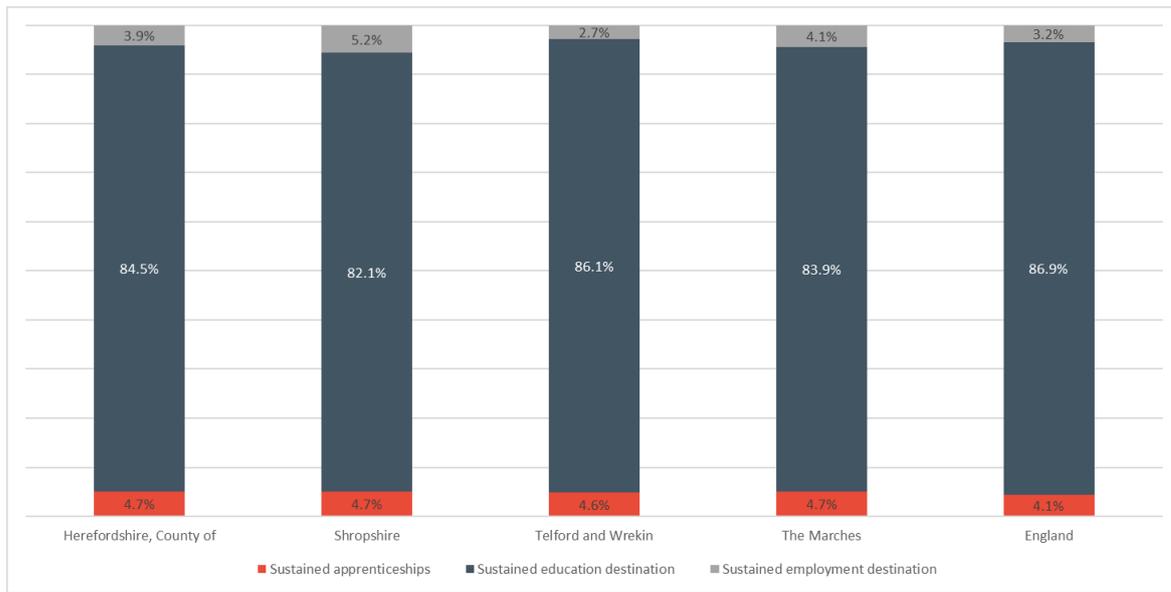


Source: KS4 Destination Measures, DfE, 2019/20 (published 2021)

A.67 All areas within The Marches are relatively in line with each other and England. There are slight variances with 5.2% going into employment in Shropshire compared to an average of 3-4% for all other areas. In Telford & Wrekin a relatively low proportion go into employment (2.7%). The number of people going into apprenticeships is almost identical in all areas. The number of those going into education is also in line in all areas.

⁸ The Careers and Enterprise Company, [Trends in Careers Education](#), 2021

Figure A.27 Key Stage 4 destinations by Local Authority - state-funded mainstream schools

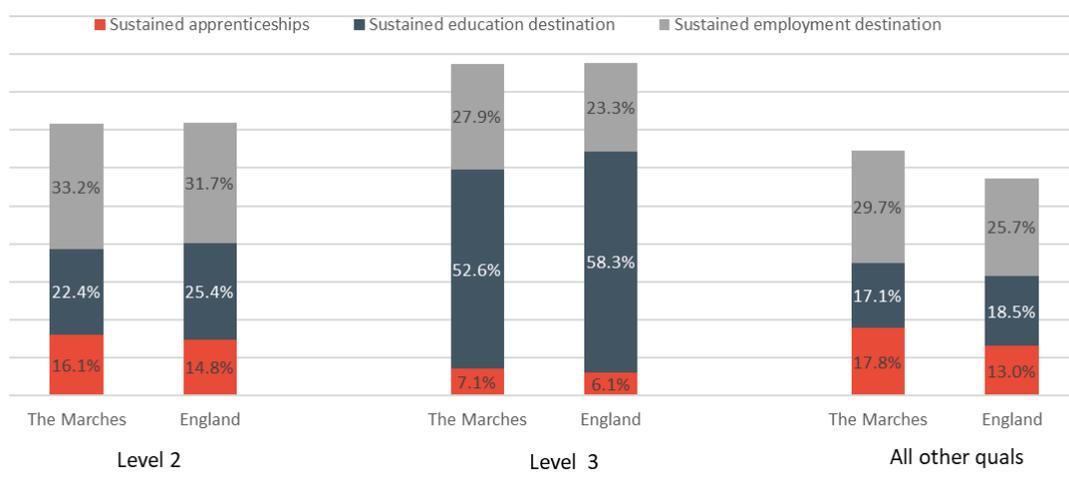


Source: KS4 Destination Measures, DfE, 2019/20 (published 2020)

KS5 Destinations

- A.68 Fewer KS5 graduates go on to education in the Marches than in England. At Level 3 KS5, 5% fewer 16-18 year olds continue education in the Marches than England. At Level 2 KS5, this gap is smaller at 3% (22% in Marches continuing education vs 25% in England). It should be noted the gap is significantly smaller in comparison to 2018/19 data where there was a gap of 13% (15% in Marches continuing education vs 28% in England).
- A.69 In 2016, local intelligence provided by Worcester Research detailed a number of schemes linking schools with higher education in the Marches such as NMITE Connect, the Children’s Universities and Explore University. Still, there has been a 12-percentage point reduction in the proportion of students in the Marches who entered an A-Level or other Level 3 qualification or progressed into an education destination since 2012/2013. Whilst the impact of such schemes has not been precisely determined, evidently more needs to be done to stop or reduce the decline of young people continuing education post-16.
- A.70 As mentioned, the ‘Closing the Gap’ report from the Careers and Enterprise Company, as well as anecdotal intelligence conveyed by Marches employers to Hatch in consultation, suggested that insufficient work-experience opportunities were being made available to students within the LEP area. At the KS5 level, such opportunities prove valuable additions to university applications, particularly in vocational subjects. Increasing provision of work-experience through traditional or innovative means may both lead to higher quality employment destinations, as well as further education opportunities for KS5 students.

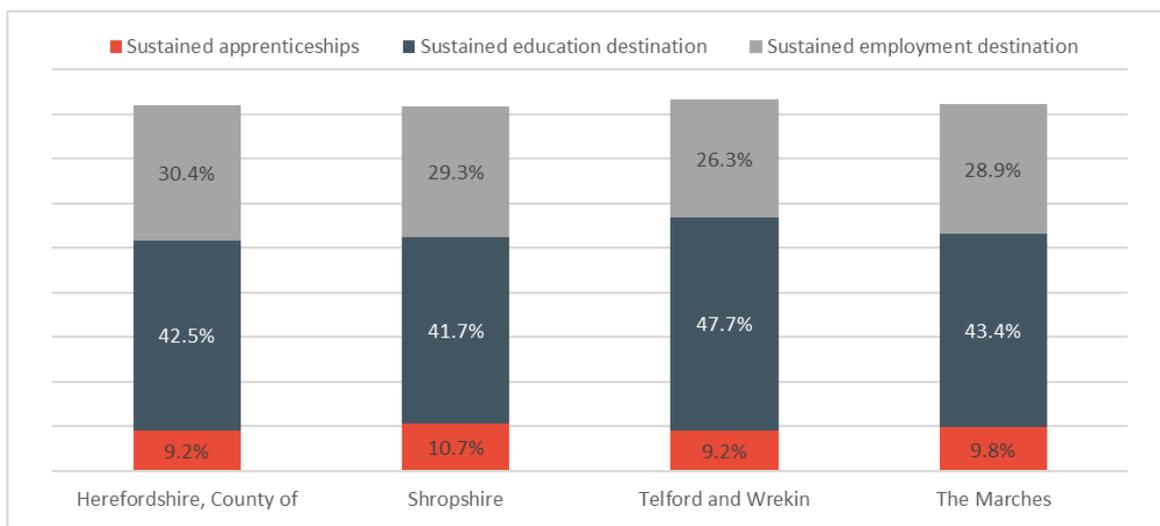
Figure A.28 16 to 18 destinations - state-funded mainstream schools and colleges, 2019/20



Source: 16-18 Destination Measures, DfE, 2019/20 (published 2021)

- A.71 16-18 destinations are similar across the Marches local authorities. In Telford & Wrekin a higher proportion of young people go on to a sustained education destination (48% compared to 43%).

Figure A.29 16-18 destinations - state-funded mainstream schools and colleges, 2019/20 by Local Authority

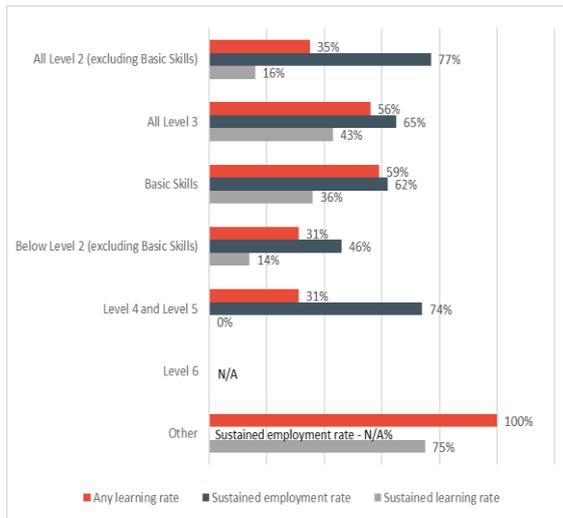


Source: 16-18 Destination Measures, DfE, 2019/20 (published 2021)

FE and skills destinations

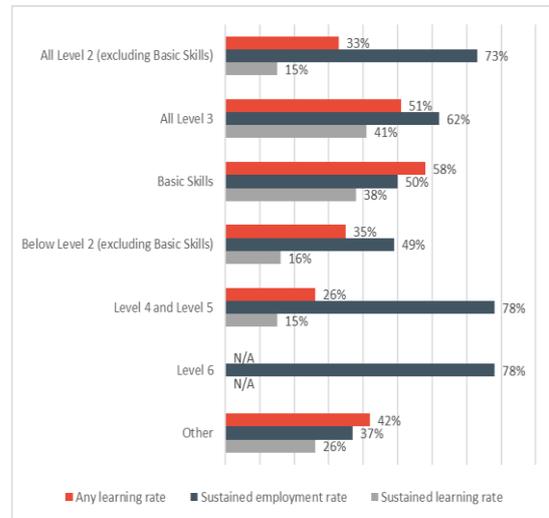
- A.72 For the Marches, sustained employment is the primary destination for Further Education and skills learners (67% of learners), with any learning (40% of learners) and sustained learning (21% of learners) accounting for other destinations. Compared to England, this represents a slightly smaller proportion of learners continuing with any or sustained learning, and slightly more learners entering sustained employment.
- A.73 In the Marches, the proportion of learners continuing to sustain employment generally increases with the level of qualification, similar to England.

Figure A.30 Destinations for adult FE & skills learners, Marches LEP 2018/19



Source: FE outcome based success measures, 2018/19 destinations, DfE (published 2021)

Figure A.31 Destinations for adult FE & skills learners, England 2018/19

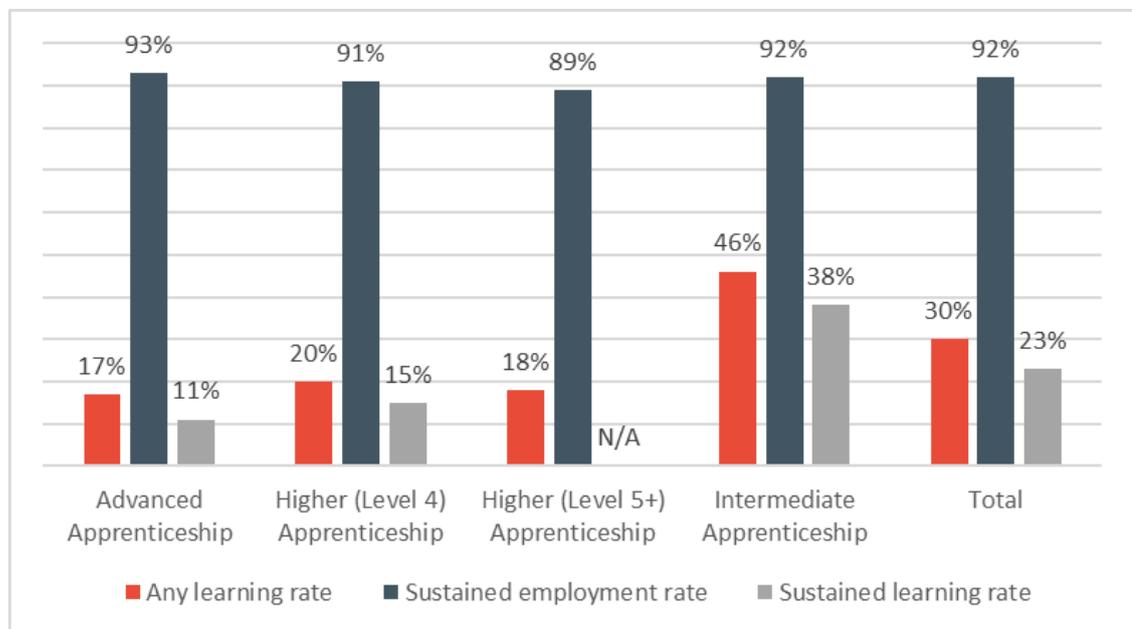


Source: FE outcome based success measures, 2018/19 destinations, DfE (published 2021)

Apprenticeship destinations

A.74 In the Marches LEP area, around 90% of apprenticeships lead to sustained employment.

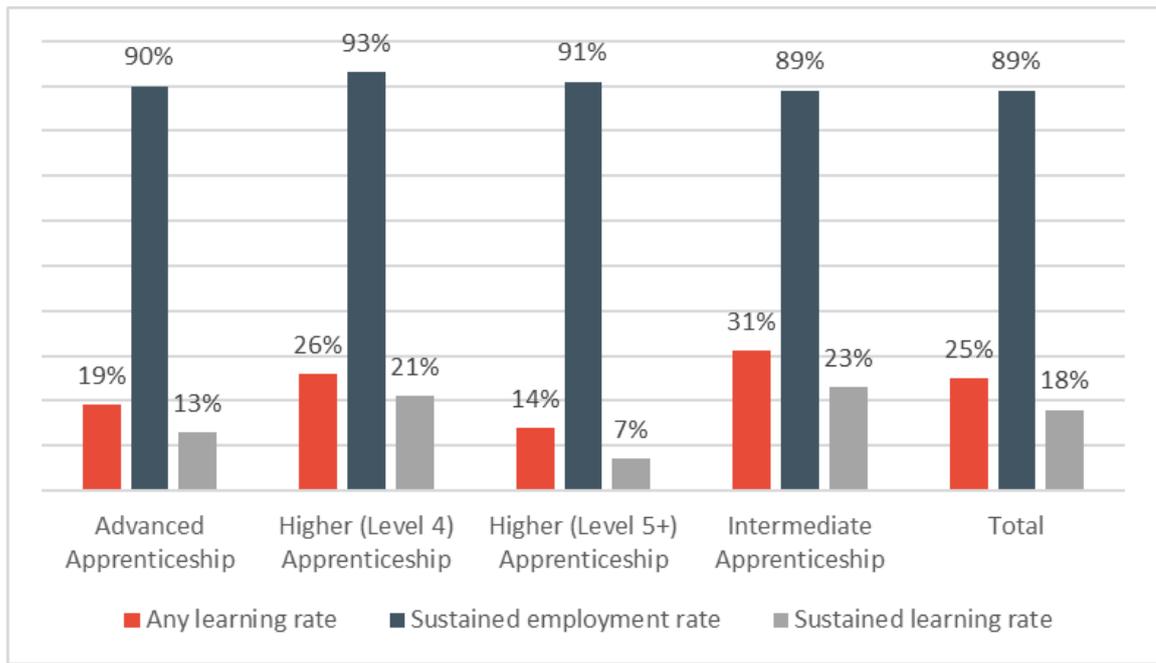
Figure A.32 Apprenticeship destinations, 2018/19 – Marches LEP



Source: FE outcome based success measures, 2018/19 destinations, DfE (published 2021)

A.75 Apprenticeship destinations are broadly similar in the Marches and England.

Figure A.33 Apprenticeship destinations, 2018/19 – England

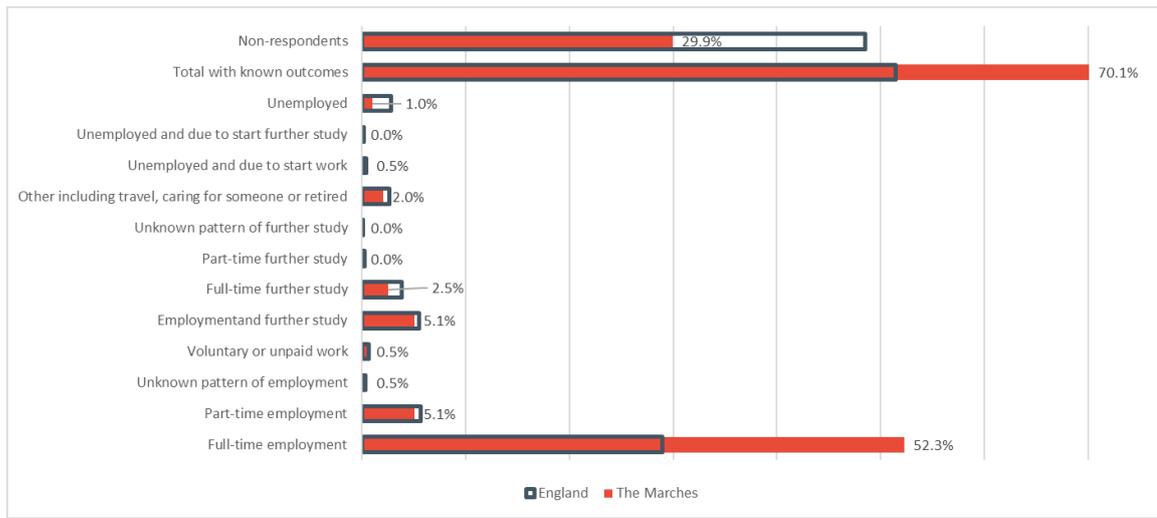


Source: FE outcome based success measures, 2018/19 destinations, DfE (published 2021)

HE Graduate destinations

- A.76 HE Graduate destination data for the Marches reports destinations of Harper Adams University graduates only. These graduates enter full-time employment at a greater rate (52%) than average graduates in England (29%). However, the number of graduates entering full time employment is significantly lower than in 2019/20 when 70% of graduates entered employment.
- A.77 Local intelligence from 2016 (Worcester Research) suggests that in spite of a relatively high proportion of Marches graduates entering the job market after graduation, only a small number of Marches employers (approximately 10%) had taken on graduate employees in 2016.

Figure A.34 Graduate destinations, 2018/19

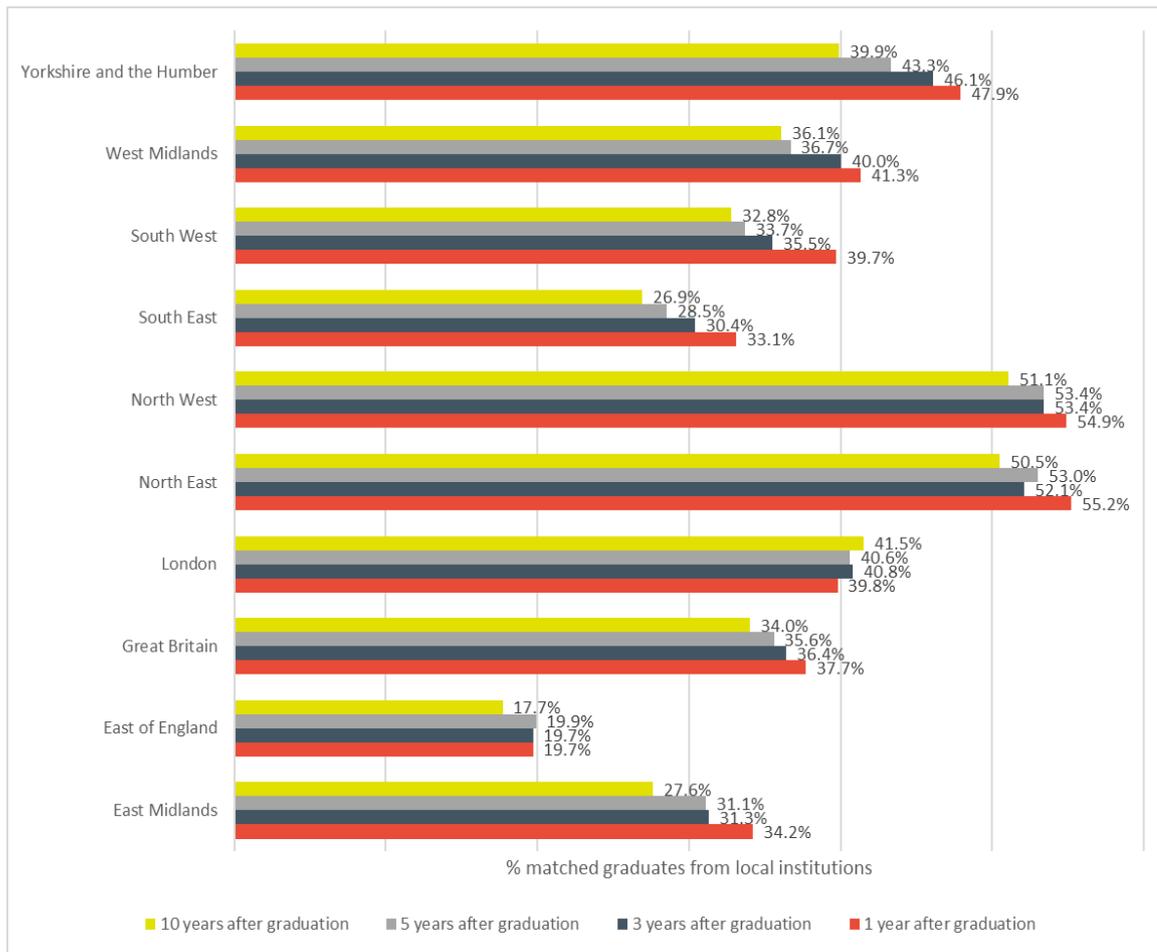


Source: HESA, 2018/19 graduates (published 2021)

Graduate retention

- A.78 It is anticipated that the increase in local HE provision will encourage more people to study locally in addition to attracting new people to the area.
- A.79 For the first year after graduation from a higher education institute, 41% of West Midlands graduates remain in the West Midlands, decreasing to 38% after 5 years.
- A.80 Local employers and providers suggest that many young people leave the Marches for higher education and then do not return to the Marches for employment. This trend is common across more rural areas of the UK. Also, providers attract national and international learners, many of whom do not intend to stay in the Marches after graduation. Given the occupational and sector mix of employment in the Marches, it is to be expected that some graduates will leave the area to seek employment opportunities in their chosen field of work.
- A.81 Education providers also recognise the importance of the area’s strong educational, environmental, cost of living and general quality of life offer in attracting and retaining higher skilled workers.

Figure A.35 Current residence of graduates from Marches HEIs, 2018/19

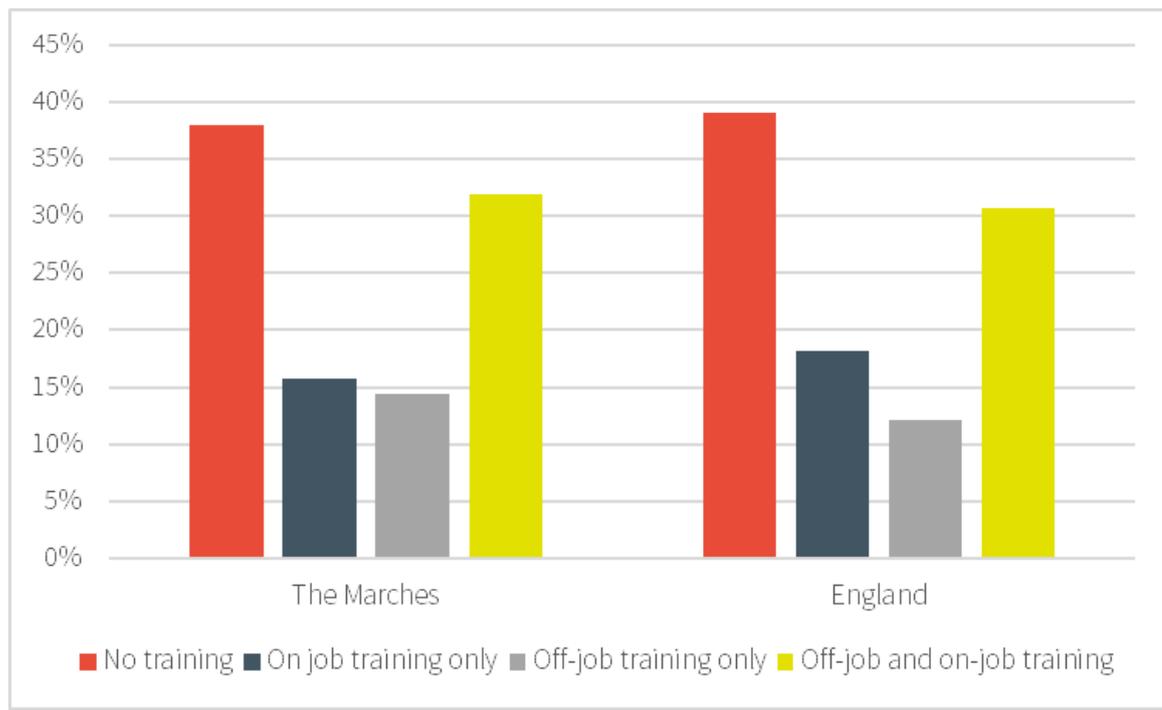


Source: Graduate Outcomes in 2018/19, DfE (published 2021)

Employer-provided training

- A.82 Approximately 62% of employers in the Marches provide training, similar to England. This primarily consists of on and off-job training (32% of providers), also a similar proportion to England.
- A.83 This broadly supports local intelligence. The Marches Sector Deep Dive analysis finds a slightly high proportion of employers in the Marches have no skills budget or training plans in place than the UK (34% in the Marches, 31% in the UK) and that employers provide lower numbers of training days (3.7 in the Marches, 4.0 in the UK).
- A.84 Currently the main barrier reported by employers to employer training is a lack of resources. This is highlighted particularly amongst SMEs and it is believed this impact has increased during the pandemic and is exacerbated by current labour market challenges. Employers consulted suggest core and soft skills are the most valuable currently, although this is expected to vary considerably by sector.

Figure A.36 Employers providing training over past 12 months, 2019



Source: Employer Skills Survey, 2019 (published 2020)

Skills demand

Skills Demand - Summary

Future demand, sectors and occupations:

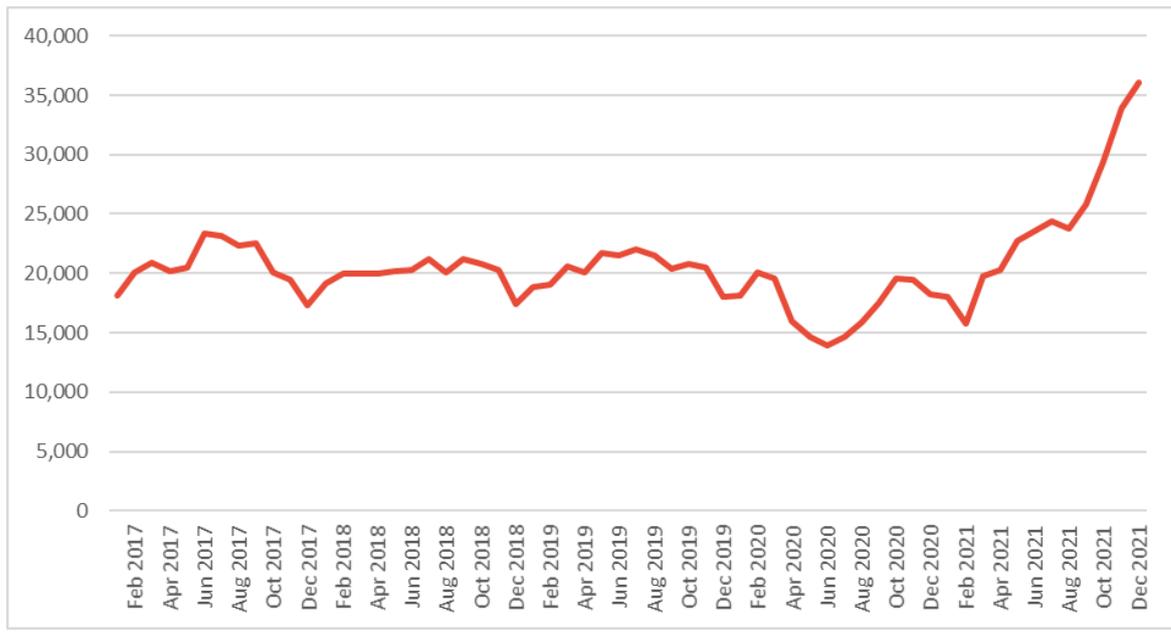
- Health and social work sector forecast for 3rd highest growth in Marches, whilst health related occupations occupy 3/5 of the top occupations for forecast growth
- The top sector for forecast growth is caring personal service occupations, whilst customer service occupations are the second top occupation forecast for growth
- Food, drink and tobacco (processing) and manufacturing are forecast for the lowest growth in the Marches. Occupations common to these industries, such as process, plant and machine operatives, are forecast to grow the least also.

- A.85 Local labour market intelligence based on job advertisements suggests that warehousing, auditing, finance, nursing and personal care were the most in demand 'hard skills' (i.e. those which must be taught or learnt) in the Marches LEP between January and December 2021. This shows a continued demand for healthcare skills and increase in demand for finance related skills compared with 2020. This may reflect an increasing demand for service sector skills.
- A.86 Marches partners understand the ongoing challenge of the need to boost digital skills, mid-career training, as well as careers education for young people and adults. The Marches SAP partners are working with local Restart and Kickstart partners to encourage skills and employability support across all age groups in the face of rapidly changing demands in the workplace.
- A.87 With a proportion of staff not proficient for the skill requirements of their role roughly similar to England, businesses in the Marches faces many of the same barriers as those across the country in securing talent. However, within the LEP area, the supply aspect is rather acute given the lower proportion of people with degree-level qualifications.

Online vacancies

- A.88 Whilst job vacancies have not returned to pre-pandemic levels in the Marches, they rebounded strongly up to the third national lockdown.

Figure A.37 Number of job postings in the Marches LEP



Source: Emsi, 2022

A.89 Current levels of employment demand have risen significantly throughout 2021. Nurses and care home workers are consistently the most numerous job vacancies in the Marches LEP. This is driven by the ageing population of the Marches, major local NHS employers and recent private sector investment in care provision.

Sector growth forecasts

A.90 To 2027, Arts and Entertainment, Support services, Health and Social Work, Accommodation and Food, and Real Estate are the sectors forecast for highest growth. Conversely, Food, Drink and Tobacco, Rest of Manufacturing, Finance and Insurance, Agriculture and Education have the lowest forecast growth. This sits slightly uneasily with local intelligence, which relays the strength and specialisation of agriculture and particularly agri-tech within the LEP area – however it is likely that the Working Futures data is unable to treat these sectors as distinct.

Job postings in the Marches have been particularly buoyant in health and care, as well as logistics related roles. It is notable that these sector projections were made well before the onset of the pandemic, and the healthy long-term growth for such sectors as Arts and Entertainment and Accommodation and Food will depend on a strong rebound underpinned by both consumer confidence and demand following successive national restrictions.

Table A.1 Sectors with highest and lowest forecast growth, The Marches 2017-2027

	Sectors with highest forecast growth (2017-2027)	Sectors with lowest forecast growth (2017-2027)
1.	Arts and entertainment	Food drink and tobacco
2.	Support services	Rest of manufacturing
3.	Health and social work	Finance and insurance
4.	Accommodation and food	Agriculture
5.	Real estate	Education

Source: Working Futures, 2017-2027 (published 2020), 2017 LEP boundaries

Occupation growth forecasts

- A.91 To 2027, Caring personal service occupations, customer service occupations, health and social care associate professionals, corporate managers and directors and health professionals are the occupations with highest forecast growth. Conversely, secretarial and related occupations, process, plant and machine operatives, textiles, printing and other skilled trades, skilled metal, electrical and electronic trades and skilled agricultural and related trades are forecast for the lowest growth.
- A.92 The Marches LEP Sector Deep Dive summary reports on expected growth in occupations between 2018 and 2022. The findings are similar with highest growth expected in Caring, Leisure and Other Services Occupations and Managers, Directors and Senior Officials. However, the deep dive reports also list relatively high growth in skills trade occupations. This difference is likely due to the change in timeframe.
- A.93 Local labour market intelligence based on job advertisements suggests some of the occupations forecast to grow the least are actually highly buoyant in the Marches' labour market. For instance, skilled agricultural and related trades occupations had grown 52% between January and October 2020, whilst process, plant and machine operative job postings grew 43% over the same period. This may be linked to changes in the local labour market associated with EU Exit.

Table A.2 Occupations with highest and lowest forecast growth, 2017-2027

	Occupations with highest forecast growth (2017-2027)	Occupations with lowest forecast growth (2017-2027)
1.	Caring personal service occupations	Secretarial and related occupations
2.	Customer service occupations	Process, plant and machine operatives
3.	Health and social care associate professionals	Textiles, printing and other skilled trades
4.	Corporate managers and directors	Skilled metal, electrical and electronic trades
5.	Health professionals	Skilled agricultural and related trades

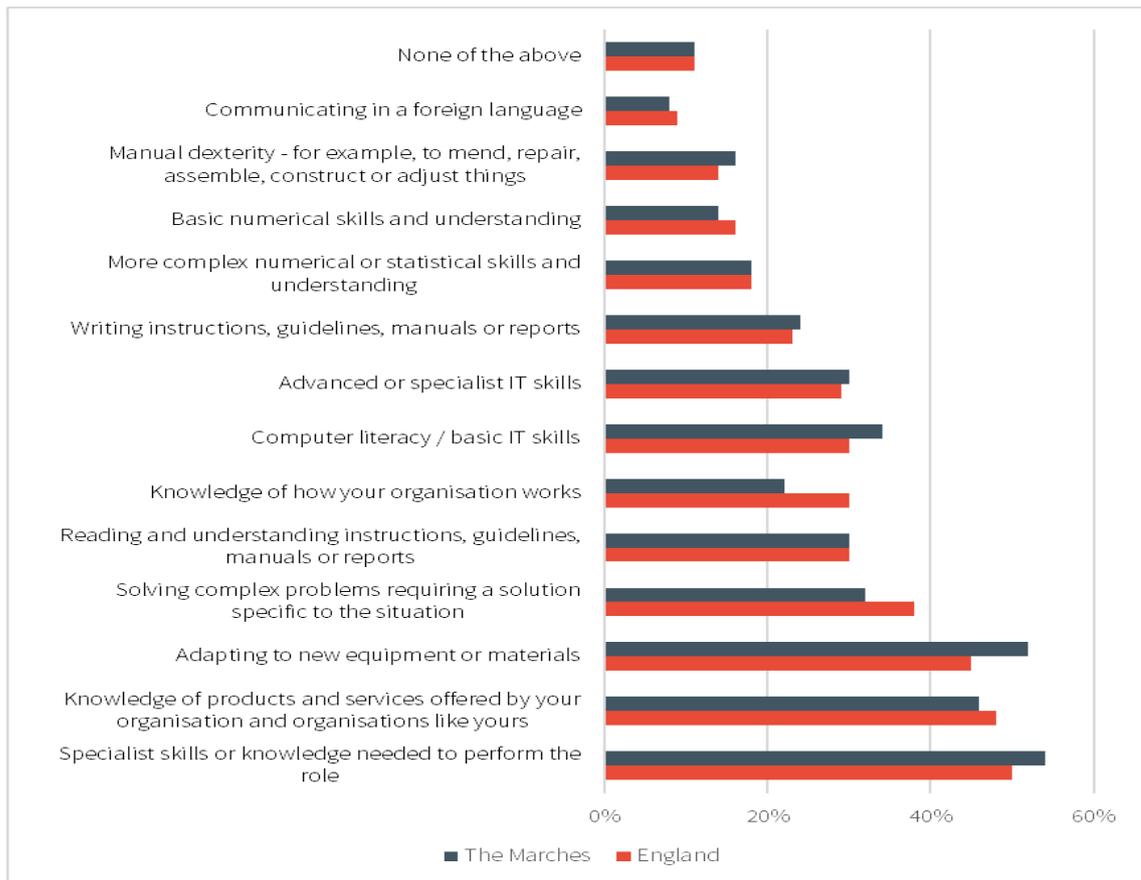
Source: Working Futures, 2017-2027 (published 2020), 2017 LEP boundaries

Skills that need developing

- A.94 'Specialist skills or knowledge needed to perform the role', 'knowledge of products and services offered by your organisation and organisations like yours' and 'adapting to new equipment or materials' were the top 3 skills reported that need developing by employers both in the Marches and England.
- A.95 Marches employers have relayed the need for supply of future-facing higher-level skills especially in tech intensive sectors such as advanced manufacturing. However simultaneously, employers in priority growth sectors highlight the need for core and soft skills (Annex B – Skills Demand, advanced manufacturing and enviro-tech), which accords well with the Employer Skills Survey results outlined below which also underpin the importance of generalist skills (e.g. knowledge of products offered, adapting to new equipment).

A.96 Many employers recognised a need for digital competency and soft skills for the workplace as, although there has been progress in developing these skills, gaps remain. Education providers also note that students who have moved to home learning will have missed out on opportunities to develop core and soft skills through spending time in school and extracurricular activities paused due to the Covid-19 crisis. A need for additional intervention to help these students to catch up with the development of these skills has been expressed by local education and training providers. This is likely to be a national issue.

Figure A.38 Skills that need developing in the workforce, 2019 – Marches and England



Source: Employer Skills Survey, 2019 (published 2020)

Mapping supply and demand

Skills Supply and Demand – Summary

The Marches, like England, experiences a high proportion of over-qualified staff (albeit less than England's proportion). It also has a high proportion of skill-shortage vacancies, which suggests that supply and demand for skilled workers is misaligned to a substantial extent in the Marches, which is also true of England.

Local intelligence provided by Worcester Research in 2016 finds that across the Marches overall, only 10% of establishments had recruited any workers from a university or HEI in the previous 2-3 years. Furthermore, 43.7% of students who studied HE in the Marches LEP and entered employment entered into the agriculture industry. For students who domiciled in the Marches and entering employment, 40.1% entered the 'public sector and support services sector'. This suggests strong demand for graduates in the public sector in the Marches. The LEP's HE provision is increasing and broadening to meet this demand and to improve the alignment of supply and demand for skills.

Local HEIs are delivering new programmes in health care, business and professional services which are sectors that are forecast to grow the most in the Marches. This provision is not fully recognised in the data presented due to it being delivered by institutions which have core bases outside of the Marches.

The Marches skills system is highly responsive and willing to adapt its offer in the face of changing and evolving requirements from the labour market. This is evident through the collaborative efforts driven by the Marches SAP in creating informal networks between employers and FE and HE providers within the LEP area, and also formal collaborative efforts such as the SOLVD Initiative to boost digital skills provision in Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire.

Matching skills supply and demand is increasingly difficult as technology continues to progress meaning that skills demands are evolving. This is particularly challenging given the time required to embed new skills and the make-up of the Marches priority sectors which are increasingly requiring digital skills (e.g. Cyber, Agri-tech, Enviro-tech, Healthcare).

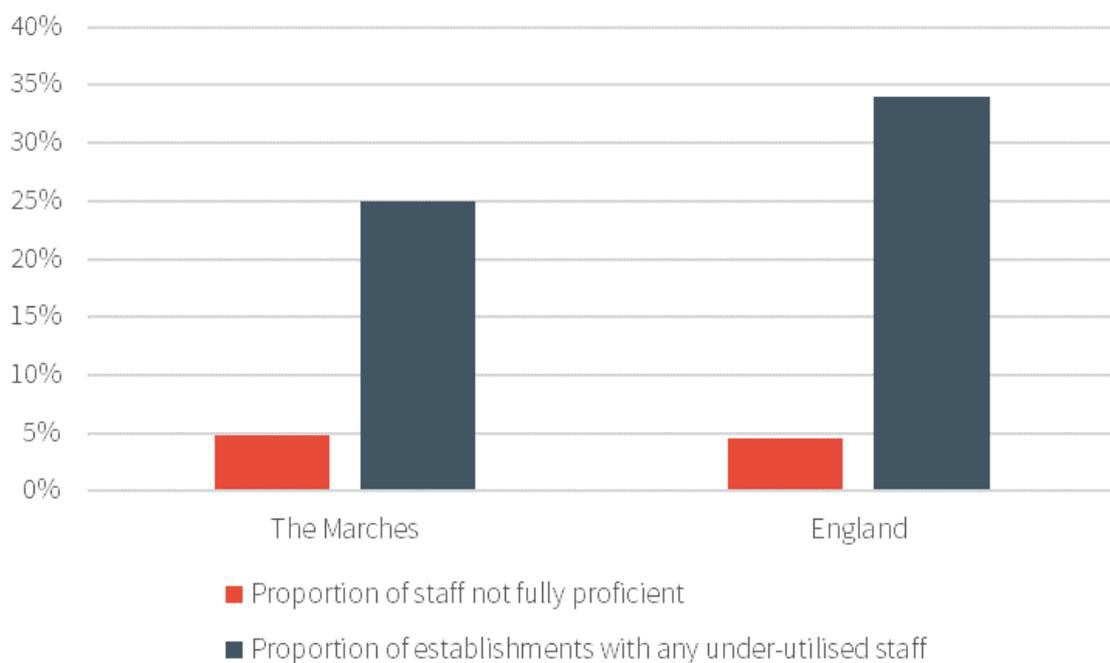
National policies and local interventions are helping to support alignment of supply and demand. For example, by investing Growth Deal funds into new equipment to support up to date learning and developing responsive specialist skills provision such as the new Marches Centre for Health, Allied Health and Social Care in Telford.

The Marches has high levels of learners (at KS4 and KS5) who leave learning to go into employment, as well as low levels of unemployment (in the labour market). More work can be done to align supply and demand to boost employment and productivity but, broadly speaking, the Marches is successful in terms of people finding their way into work as they leave education. To 'fully exploit' this supply now and in the future, provision of the right sort of skills – as determined through collaboration between providers and employers, which is ongoing in the Marches as described above – will be essential.

Proficiency of workforce

- A.97 In the Marches, 4.8% of staff are under qualified and 25% are overqualified. This compares to 4.6% and 34% for England respectively. This suggests there are supply and demand matching issues in terms of supply of some skills and there is scope for more demand of some higher skills, however relative performance to England is good.
- A.98 Local insight gained from Hatch’s consultation with Marches employers suggests that the increasing importance digital skills across and between sectors (i.e. business-to-business and the supply chain) could be creating a proficiency mismatch, with highly varying levels of digital proficiency within and between sectors.
- A.99 Generally, however, when it comes to sector-specific proficiency, Marches employers have suggested the area’s workforce proficiency is on par with the national average (e.g. Annex B – Mapping supply and demand, advanced manufacturing).
- A.100 Based on consultations with employers and skills providers, we find there is concern around amongst some employers around education leavers having the core skills required for work, and that this is a long-term issue which requires further discussion. It is anticipated that this has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Both skills providers and employers also report they have limited capacity to tackle work-readiness, although the SAP notes public interventions such as those of the Careers and Enterprise Company is helping to support this.

Figure A.39 Staff that are not fully proficient and under-utilised, 2019

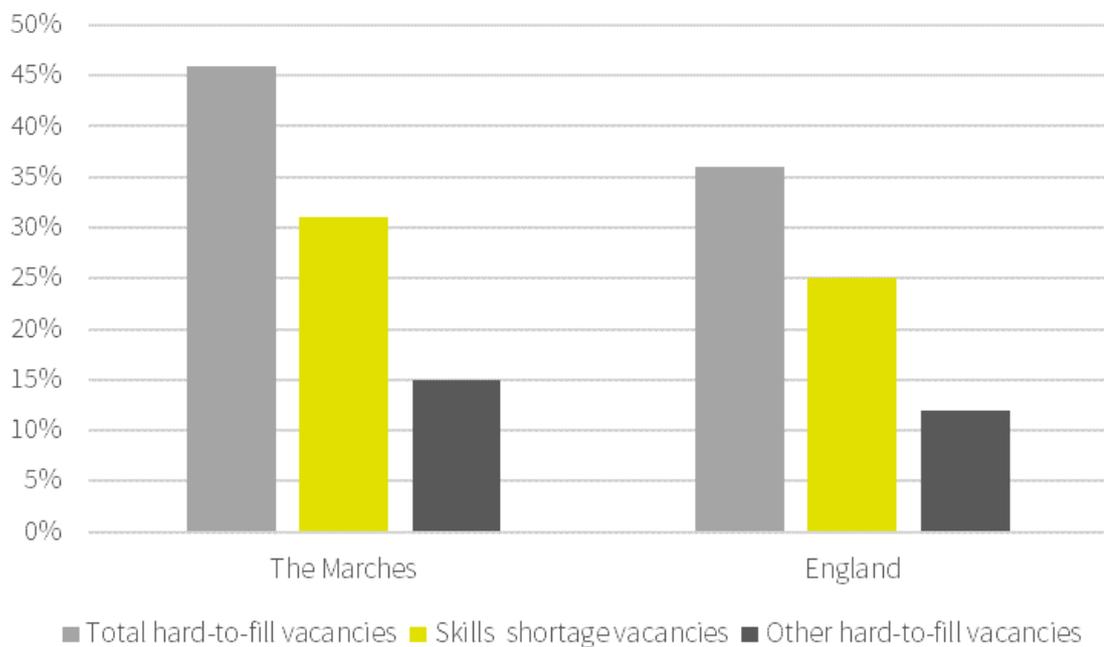


Source: Employer Skills Survey, 2019 (published 2020), 2019 LEP boundaries

Hard-to-fill and skills shortage vacancies

- A.101 In the Marches, 46% of vacancies are hard to fill, with 31% of vacancies being skills shortage vacancies. Both of these proportions are higher than the England equivalents of 36% and 25% respectively.
- A.102 Local employers and education providers have suggested that some vacancies are hard to fill due to poor perceptions of work in certain industries which are large employers in the Marches, for example agriculture or health related roles. Skills shortages are noted in manufacturing roles of soft skills, metalwork, furniture making and ceramics and glass, agricultural roles of poultry, welfare and general agriculture and Level 1 and 2 Food and Drink sector roles. Across sectors, the need for competency in digital skills was noted.

Figure A.40 Proportion of vacancies that are hard-to-fill, 2019



Source: Employer Skills Survey, 2019 (published 2020), 2019 LEP boundaries

Appendix B - Additional Analysis And References

B.1 The following tables present findings from local research and anecdotal evidence drawn from consultations carried out ahead of the 2021 Local Skills Report. Consultees are listed in Appendix A of the 2022 Local Skills Report update.

Local Landscape

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital 	<p>There are several elements to the digital challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access Vertical digital skills (including sector specific skills) Horizontal digital skills Digital skills needs are ever evolving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is both an immediate and long term due to the ever-present and evolving nature of the work Digital is too generic a term and thinking of it as a single entity is unhelpful – ‘Digital’ pervades all aspects of life and work and the skills required need to be more clearly defined within each Quality of online skills provision needs to be monitored to ensure it is valuable. To some extent core digital skills are being developed in the education system already Upskilling of SME owners may be needed to ensure they benefit from digital opportunities 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ageing Workforce 	<p>The Marches ageing population is creating growing demand to ensure people at later stages of their working life have the right skills and help transfer skills to younger generations of workers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of over 65s is growing faster in the Marches than the UK. Provision for older people re-entering the labour market is limited. Skills Support for the Workforce and Skills Support for Redundancy programmes are addressing these. 	SEP Evidence Base, 2018 Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspiring Young People 	<p>The Marches needs to secure more residents with higher-level skills to match national levels and compete.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A relatively low proportion of the population are qualified to NVQ L4+, particularly in Telford & Wrekin A greater range of levels >4, including higher level technical training should be provided by the sector and supported by business. 	SEP Evidence Base, 2018 Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers To Participation 	<p>There remain areas where access to education is difficult. One potential solution is for colleges to provide a wide range of opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In areas where access to education is difficult, there is a need within each geography (and therefore college catchment) to provide a wide range of opportunities. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers To Participation 	<p>Although the Marches economy has a strong track-record of generating employment opportunities, these are not evenly available/accessible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Marches, 80% of the working age population are active, compared to 78.2% nationally. There is also a high employment rate of 76.7% compared to the UK average of 74.7%, however, Telford & Wrekin have 	SEP Evidence Base, 2018

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		lower levels of economic activity and higher unemployment rate than the UK average.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers To Participation 	Digital Connectivity may be holding back learning and digital adoption in businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Marches has areas with high proportion of premises with slow/medium speeds eg Ludlow, Bishop's Castle, Bridgnorth. 	SEP Evidence Base, 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers To Participation 	Employment support should continue to consider opportunities to support people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derwen College is an important asset for the Marches as it provides specialist further education for people with SEND. There is a continued need to consider availability of employment opportunities and support for people with SEND. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational Pathways 	The area's strong base in technical skills offers an attractive backdrop to grow and attract new businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Marches has a higher proportion of medium skills (NVQ Level 2 and 3) and occupations than national average 	SEP Evidence Base, 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-Tech 	The sector isn't currently a major contributor to Marches' GVA or jobs. Growth has been stagnant in recent years and jobs are projected to shrink by 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agri-tech sector accounts for 4.6% of total GVA and 3.7% of total jobs. Both jobs and GVA have been static and jobs numbers are expected to fall by 2022. The sector's Jobs (92%) and GVA (65%) are very much dominated (65%) by "Growing of crops, market gardening, horticulture; Farming of animals" LQ (4.8). This is a low value subsector with average wage £21k and is also expected to contract by around 300 jobs by 2022 Two-thirds of jobs are farmers and farm worker roles with just 10% in managerial roles and no noticeable scientific/tech roles identified 	Agri-tech Deep Dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-Tech 	The Marches has an HE anchor asset to build on.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harper Adams University specialises in the agricultural and rural sector and has significant agri-tech research and innovation capability, and has 4,700 students enrolled in agri-subjects (80% of total). There are a further 3,000 at the University of Chester and Wolverhampton, but on their main campus, outside the area. 	Agri-tech deep dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business & Professional Services (BPS) 	BPS is a large and rapidly evolving sector which will increasingly rely on skilled knowhow to compete and succeed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BPS is a large employer (19% of jobs) which generates significant GVA (~30%) for the economy BPS is also the largest overall contributor to GVA growth in Marches (accounting for nearly half of growth between 2017/18) It is diverse (average wages and added value vary widely across the sector from £10k to £55), has an important role in sustaining other sectors and competes for skills sets relevant across the business base 	BPS Deep Dive, 2020

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BPS sector needs both detailed subject knowledge and transferable skills to be part of vocational qualifications In future medium sized firms are likely to face the biggest challenges and technology/self-service platforms are expected to replace lost of lower/mid-tier roles. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business & Professional Services (BPS) 	<p>Marches doesn't have any major BPS sector strengths, but it holds its own in some key sub-sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Marches' BPS has a Location Quotient of 0.7 but within it some big sub sectors around 1.0 e.g. employment agencies, other personal services, business and other management consultancy activities and head offices. It has a base in some key sub-sectors such as computer consultancy activities, professional, scientific and technical activities, business support service activities and renting /real estate but these sub-sectors are under-represented against the national average There is a reasonably broad spread of occupations within the BPS with no single role accounting for more than ~10% of jobs. Although most common occupations are in lower-value roles such as book-keeping, receptionist sales roles etc there is a good profile of business development roles, financial managers/directors, HR, sales execs, project management professional, accountants, marketing professionals etc 	<p>BPS Deep Dive, 2020</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enviro-Tech 	<p>The Marches has ambitions to grow its enviro-tech sector as the global interest in low carbon and sustainability evolves, but the sector is small locally and success will require a shift to higher value and innovation sub-sectors, as well as wider access to softer general skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enviro-Tech accounts for 1% jobs ~3,000 in Marches according to Deep Dive but nearly 8,000 according to the sector needs assessment, however it is growing and the area aims to create 1,000 new energy sector jobs by 2030 Demand for low-skill workers has decreased and the demand and rewards for higher-skill workers have increased. The green economy is not well defined as a sector of activity and some of the core environmental skills are not necessarily different from general traditional labour skills. Sustainability and the environment are diverse topics that cut across many employment sectors with an interest in efficiency, resource management and waste reduction. Roles in the sector tend to be low on the automation index 	<p>Enviro Sector Needs Assessment, 2017 Envirotech Deep Dive SEP, 2020</p>

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GVA is growing although the data is skewed by electricity, water collection, treatment and supply and the collection of non-hazardous waste accounting for nearly 66% of the total sector GVA. • Marches has aspirations to grow its anaerobic digestion for power, solar and water management expertise alongside a growing stewardship role for the countryside. 13% of the UK's anaerobic digestors are in the Marches • Building upon the work of the Marches Nature Partnership (MNP), the Centre for Research into Environmental Science and Technology (CREST) at University Centre Shrewsbury (UCS) puts the Marches on the map in terms of natural resource management and natural capital management. • The Marches is a lower ranked LEP on a range of key innovation indicators • Government's Energy White Paper and 10 Point Plan promote the need for this sector to help "build back better". • The development of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy's (BEIS') Green Homes Grant demonstrated the need to increase skills within the supply chain. • The Midlands Energy Hub has therefore run a skills competition to boost the availability of green skills training. • With the new Gigafactory announced for Coventry, there will be a need for the wider supply chain to be skilled up in this technology. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enviro-Tech 	<p>The sector is hard to define but it appears that a lot of people are in lower skill roles but with good wages on offer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although wage levels are generally good across the sector, the Marches has a high concentration of jobs in lower value sub-sectors: Collection of non-hazardous waste which employs over 1,000 and has LQ of 1.79 (Deep Dive); Other engineering and Technical Testing Needs Assessment show up that the Sector Needs Assessment as large and with high level of specialisation in the Marches. • 29% of employees have L4+ qualification cf 39% nationally • Enviro-tech occupations are hard to define and the one used in the Deep Dive has (Landscape) Gardeners accounting for one third of jobs. • Just 10% of the 2,600 jobs identified are Environment Professionals however there are other high skilled roles in the definition such as town planning, architecture, conservation roles 	<p>Enviro Sector Needs Assessment, 2017 Envirotech Deep Dive, 2020</p>

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enviro-Tech 	Like many other sectors, the Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services sector has seen significant decline in under the pandemic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Marches, sales in the Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services sector have decreased by £70m between January and October 2020. This has occurred consistently across the subsectors of environmental sales, renewable energy sales and low carbon sales. 	Midlands Region and LEPs Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services COVID-19 Impact, 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enviro-Tech 	Prior to the pandemic growth in low carbon environmental goods and services subsectors was expected in environmental monitoring, marine pollution control, geothermal, biomass and waste management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Monitoring with small GVA but very high scalability (stronger position than the Midlands average) Marine Pollution Control with small GVA but very high scalability (stronger position than the Midlands average) Geothermal with good GVA and high Scalability (stronger position than the Midlands average) Biomass with good GVA and medium Scalability (stronger position than the Midlands average) Waste Management with good GVA and medium Scalability (stronger position than the Midlands average) The average annual growth rate in jobs was around 3.5% with a total of 12,800 jobs in 2019. 	Midlands Region and LEPs Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services COVID-19 Impact, 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Manufacturing & Processing (FMP) 	Food and drink is an important and growing sector for the Marches in terms of large employers and innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food and drink accounts for 3.8% of Marches GVA, 3.2% of jobs, 0.6% of establishments. These proportions are higher than the national base. FMP employment grew double the national rate from 2009-16. The Marches FMP LQ is 2.5. The Marches has all aspects of the production chain, some larger businesses (Muller, Avara Foods), an international reputation and pioneering research is delivered at Harper Adams University. The sector grew above UK levels (0.5% compared to 0.3%). The sector provides good average wages in the Marches (£28,420) This rises to £37,361 in the spirits industry and £36,630 in the cider and fruit wine manufacturing industry, accounting for 25 establishments in total. 	Food and Drink Deep Dive, 2020 FMP Sector Needs Assessment, 2017

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Manufacturing & Processing 	Some food manufacturing industries are highly specialised in the Marches eg manufacture of cider and other fruit wines, processing and preserving of poultry meat, operation of dairies and cheese making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High LQs (over 4) include: manufacture of cider and other fruit wines (38.91), processing and preserving of poultry meat (10.37), operation of dairies and cheese making (6.75) Employment in Herefordshire accounts 43% of Marches FMP. Half of Hereford's FMP employees work for Cargill Europe. Other clusters are in Oswestry, Ellesmere, Shrewsbury, Market Drayton, Telford and Bromyard. The number of jobs in these industries are expected to grow. By 2022 there are forecast, new jobs in processing and preserving of meat (206), processing and preserving of poultry meat (154), manufacture of cider and other fruit wines (93), distilling, rectifying and blending of spirits (32). Also, 57 new jobs expected in the manufacture of beer. 	Food and Drink Deep Dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Manufacturing & Processing 	The Marches has a HE base in food and drink related studies on which to build.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harper Adams University specialises in the agricultural and rural sector with an important focus on primary production, food processing and related management and engineering disciplines. 160 students study Food and Drink sector subjects at Harper Adams. University of Wolverhampton also offers specialist training courses for the sector and the Marches Centre of Manufacturing and Technology offer apprenticeships and training. National food security is high on the agenda. There may be an opportunity to grow this industry given the rise of interest in food, quality, provenience and alternative food sources. 	Food and Drink Deep Dive, 2020 FMP Sector Needs Assessment, 2017 Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defence And Security 	The Marches has some cyber assets from which it aims to grow its base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skylon Park, Anon AI, University of Wolverhampton Telford, Harper Adams University and an internationally recognised cyber cluster in Malvern. There has been investment in the University of Wolverhampton's Midlands Centre for Cyber Security at Skylon Park which opened in December 2021 creating up to 185 jobs. 	Cyber Security SIA, 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital And Creative 	Marches' digital sector has an established based in the Marches and is growing in size and skills requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although the Marches is middling in size terms relative to comparator areas ~7,000 people are employed by inherently digitally businesses. Digital sector employment only grew by 5% from 2012 -17 compared to national growth of 29% digital (behind WM and Stoke Staffs) 	Marches Digital Strategy, 2019

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Consulting accounts for over half of employment and hardware manufacturing has grown 135% in 2012-17 and now outperforms UK in specialisation terms 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor economy 	The visitor economy has a crucial role to play creating employment opportunities and showcasing the Marches to the rest of the UK but, is not growing in line with national trends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The visitor economy supports a wide range of jobs and creates volunteering opportunities which introduce new career opportunities. Visitors create a demand for local businesses which encourages business starts and reinforces quality of life values. Jobs decreased by 23% (7,025) from 2017, despite a national increase of 0.5%. 	Visitor Economy Strategy, 2020 Deep Dive Exec Summary, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor economy 	The sector should present as ‘world class’ in order to compete nationally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sector needs to ensure it retains itself as a “go to” region after the Staycation boom subsides and attracts high spenders with budgets to be discerning 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education 	Education is a critical enabling sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a significant source of employment across the Marches. Part of the sell of the Marches region for those able to relocate is the availability of high-quality local education provision. There are risks around skills in this sector given the impact of COVID-19. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 Recovery 	As the Marches LEP recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, there are significant skills risks around training, reskilling and redeploying workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having previously experienced low unemployment, the pandemic resulted in a fall in employment and a significant increase in unemployment with percentage changes in some months higher than the national average. In February 2021, the Marches had 10,735 more claimants compared to March 2020. This is an increase of 112.4% - matching the UK average increase. At this time, there were 41,700 posts furloughed (a lower rate than the West Midlands and UK average). By 31 January 2021, the number of employments furloughed in the Marches had decreased by 1,600 people (-3.7%) more slowly than the UK rate. In February 2021, the sector in the Marches with the highest number of employments furloughed was the accommodation and food services sector at 9,440, followed by wholesale and retail repair of motor vehicles at 9,070. This was followed by manufacturing at 3,330 employments furloughed. There are risks around training, re-skilling and redeploying the significant number of people made redundant. Also, as loans are repaid and 	Economic Recovery Plan, 2021

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		businesses find they may not be able to operate profitably in the new working environment, there is a need for careful planning and coordination.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 Recovery 	COVID-19 risks intensifying barriers to participation for older and younger workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older workers are susceptible to covid-related unemployment risks such as age discrimination and caring responsibilities. Historical evidence of recessions shows people aged over 50 are more likely to become inactive in the labour market if unemployed. Young people are more likely to be working in precarious zero hours jobs that have been most affected by lockdown and they have fewer resources/experiences to call upon to reengage in the labour market, which traditionally affects their long-term career development. 	Fuller Working Lives Bulletin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 Recovery 	COVID-19 has created real demand for online learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and colleges have needed to quickly establish online learning provision which could provide a real base for future expansion of learning and open opportunities for more flexible learning with greater reach, beyond the Marches This flexibility could help support Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and learning for older workers with a requirement for flexibility around learning, but there may be barriers to employers funding online learning and to younger students who prefer to attend in person. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 Recovery 	The need for business management and leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need for change management, business recovery and resilience. It is also worth noting the impact of other events on the SME infrastructure e.g. floods in Winter 2020. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 Recovery 	The crisis presents opportunities for rebalancing of the Marches economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Marches could re-establish itself as a leader in the staycation industry, attract higher skilled workers who are operating remotely, better promote its Health and Social Care strengths under an environment which has re-evaluated their importance and continue to build on digital skills which have been developed across the board. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport Technology 	The Marches has some clusters of transport technology sector activities.	<p>Key hotspots of transport technologies and logistics activity are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telford and nearby market towns of Oakengates, Horton, Madeley, Donnington Wood all have high numbers of jobs in the sector. 	Transport Technology Deep Dive, 2021 Jobs Hotspot Map 2021

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shrewsbury: with concentrations in the town centre and in outskirts to the north and northeast. Growth of these sectors has remained relatively flat. • Hereford and nearby Ballingham, particularly in the city centre. <p>Other small towns have differing Transport Technologies characteristics. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ledbury; which recorded modest growth since 2016 in the outer town centre but decreases within the town centre • Ross-on-Wye; which saw decreases in outer town centre as well as large decreases in the nearby areas • Oswestry; which has seen decreases since 2016 • Whitchurch; which saw small decreases • Market Drayton; which saw modest increase since 2016. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Technology 	<p>A significant number of transportation and storage sector employees were furloughed in 2020/21.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across the UK, employees furloughed in the transportation and storage sector increased dramatically from 169,400 on 23rd March 2020 to a high of 391,300 on 1st May 2020. This then fell back down to 90,600 as of 30th September 2021, making up 8% of all employees on furlough. • Marches furlough data by sector is available for the months March 2021 onwards. The data shows a decrease in the number of employments furloughed between March and September 2021 (-570), reaching 390 in September 2021. At this time, employees furloughed in the transportation and storage sector made up 4% of all employees on furlough in the Marches. 	<p>Transport Technology Deep Dive, 2021</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality, Catering and Visitor Economy 	<p>The Covid-19 pandemic led to economic uncertainty particularly in the hospitality sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the weeks just after Christmas 2020, 12% of pubs and bars reported that it was likely they would make redundancies in the next three months. This number fell to approximately 4% by late February 2021. It is unclear whether this is because of increased certainty or because the redundancies had already gone through. 	<p>Hospitality Catering and Visitor Economy Deep Dive, 2021</p>

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider reports from those representing the hospitality industries suggest workers have been retraining for other industries. • Across the economy, between February 2020 and May 2021, over 342,000 people lost their jobs, 81% of which were in the accommodation and food services sector, despite the success and extension of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. • In 2020, an estimated 1.1 million travel and tourism jobs were cumulatively at risk as a result of the reduced travel activity. They continue to be vulnerable to persistent weak demand. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail 	<p>There are some hubs of retail attractions in the LEP area.</p>	<p>Key Marches town centres are hubs of retail attractions in the LEP area. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telford and nearby market towns of Oakengates, Donnington, Madeley and Wellington: Telford and parts of Wellington and Madeley are particularly reliant on retail jobs, although since 2016 there has been distributed growth and shrinkage. • Shrewsbury: there are concentrations of retail jobs in the town centre and the outskirts to the north and south. Growth has remained relatively flat in these areas of high concentration. • Hereford: specifically the city centre and also just south of the city there has been a steady rise in retail jobs. <p>Other small towns, with differing characteristics. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ross-on-Wye, Leominster, Ludlow, Church Stretton, Market Drayton, Whitchurch and Oswestry all have pockets of high retail jobs levels. • Retail jobs have grown in some areas since 2016, largely in out-of-town areas or suburbs, but notably in central Bromyard, Market Drayton and parts of Ludlow and Newport. • Overall, retail activity is primarily concentrated in town centres across the Marches. 	<p>Retail Deep Dive, 2021</p>

Skills Supply

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspiring Young People 	Quality of Kickstart experience needs to lead to sustained ongoing employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Marches has a good base of gateways and steps to allow businesses to now directly apply for <30 places providing a good basis for the Marches to build on a good beginning for Kickstart Business engagement in Kickstart may be being held back by lack of recognition of the mentoring that is required for young participants 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspiring Young People 	Careers advice and experience is a critical tool in getting young people to appreciate local work options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Marches is in the midst of a change in the way careers advice and guidance operates and there is a recognition that more can be done to deliver creative experiences and to better record the experience of participants. Some of the most important sectors in the Marches are poorly perceived as career options. There is a lack of understanding of the roles available and misperceptions around the nature of work. In the short term, there is a risk that young people seeking highly-skilled careers will leave the Marches for Higher Education and not return. Therefore, the need is to make young people aware of the options in the Marches and tackle demand side interventions to encourage more higher skill opportunities. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers To Participation 	The Marches is currently taking steps to widen workforce participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The local authorities in Herefordshire and Telford & Wrekin deliver adult and community learning through their Adult Education budget grant. Courses are aimed at widening participation by supporting adults back into learning, training and employment, through community outreach provision delivered in local venues. This contributes to a wide range of outcomes for individuals and the wider community including personal and social, educational attainment, economic regeneration, and improved health and well-being. In Shropshire the Adult Education budget is managed through FE providers. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers To Participation 	Lots of Marches' lower skilled residents have little incentive to acquire new skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many lower skilled residents have jobs they can adequately undertake without additional training and, unless their employer is making use of the levy, are unlikely to be encouraged to invest time in learning. 	Anecdotal

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers To Participation 	Although the Marches economy has a strong track-record of generating employment opportunities, these are not evenly available/accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Marches, 80% of the working age population are active, compared to 78.2% nationally. There is also a high employment rate of 76.7% compared to the UK average of 74.7%, however, Telford & Wrekin have lower levels of economic activity and higher unemployment rate than the UK average. 	SEP Evidence Base, 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers To Participation 	Providers need to capitalise on the opportunity for more digital course delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More work is needed to understand capacity among providers to deliver more courses remotely for dispersed residents and to make learning more accessible to people with other commitments. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers To Participation 	Microcredentialling provides an opportunity to demonstrate skills of a potential employee at a more detailed level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It can be difficult for employers and employees to communicate what skills they have/need. There may be a particular need for this around core skills which are often assumed but not accredited. This could help older unemployed people return to work, possibly in new sectors. Microcredentialling, if properly accredited and recognised could demonstrate skills more precisely. Open University or bitesized FE/HE courses could also help to upskill employees, particularly who are out of work due to the pandemic. This could be supported by the Universal Skills Builder Partnership. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational Pathways 	Apprenticeships in the Marches have been growing but there appears to be scope to ramp up the volume further across many sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total number of apprenticeships in the Marches (across all sectors) increased to 6,360 in 2018/19 - up 5.5% compared to 4.7% nationally. A higher proportion of Marches residents have trade apprenticeship qualifications than in the UK (4% vs 3%). However, the balance of supply and demand for apprenticeship qualified workers varies by sector and suggests there is a need for more apprenticeships. For example, some manufacturing skills shortages (metalwork, furniture making, ceramics and glass) could be met with apprenticeships. There is scope for greater recycling of unspent apprenticeship levy funds. 	Sector Deep Dives, 2020 Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational Pathways 	There is a need for greater provision of vocational training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A greater range of levels >4, including higher level technical training, should be provided by the sector and supported by business. 	Anecdotal

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to high quality training services can be difficult and need to be considered. There is a need to work together to provide appropriate educational opportunities. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational Pathways 	Creation of vocational pathways needs to be more accessible for employers and providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprenticeship standards require more flexibility to keep up with the pace of change in technology. It has become harder for employers to offer apprenticeships as a result of the pandemic and so more support or communication of benefits may be needed. FE colleges could meet demand with more capacity. T Levels require a high level of resources from employers and educators. Support may be required to enable this. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand-Led Provision 	Too few Marches employers have training plans in place and too little in-work training is provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colleges are using data more to help design courses provision but it is unclear they have the capacity to understand demand and develop appropriate course programmes. This concern is particularly acute in relation to digital skills provision. Skills Support for the Workforce (ESF project) provides a platform service to help businesses develop training plans. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand-Led Provision 	There is a need for significant investment in FE infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is needed to support the demand generated by the rising demography, the home building programmes and the potential for relocation to the Marches post-COVID. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply-led provision 	There may be scope for supply led provision to anticipate future skills needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to invest in the infrastructure to support the skills needs identified which have limited financial viability in the short term in a demand led system. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careers Advice & Guidance 	Too many young people are missing out on employer encounters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17% of young people (7,900 school and college students) in the Marches are missing out on employer encounters. This is a medium level gap compared to other LEP areas. 31% are missing out on workplace experiences. (3,800 school and college students. This is a medium level gap compared to other LEP Areas. Employers can find leavers lack the basic behaviours needed in the workplace. A lack of earlier interaction with employers contributes to this. 	Careers and Enterprise Company, Closing the Gap, 2019 Anecdotal

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The role of work experience also needs to be revisited. The Wolf recommendations, accepted by the government and still driving government policy, were for work experience to take place closer to the point of entry to the labour market. This is made very difficult by the competition for the limited number of placements because so many of these placements are several years from entry into the workplace. More support for businesses to take on work experience placements could help to increase numbers. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careers Advice & Guidance 	Relationships between schools and FE could be used to support careers IAG.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are some good relationships between schools and FE that can be built on. The logistics are an issue as there are so many different schools and FE providers to link up. A centralised approach is needed (eg via The Marches Careers Hub). 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careers Advice & Guidance 	There is a need for Independent Careers Advice and Guidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It needs to be recognised that the lead time on changing perceptions and therefore behaviours is significant. Marches Skills Provider Network offer a comprehensive course finder online, which is updated by training providers twice a year, this could be better promoted if supported centrally. A 'Ladder for Shropshire' approach in the wider geography could help signpost opportunities Chamber of Commerce visual projects on local occupations appear to be helpful. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careers Advice & Guidance 	There is potential for entrepreneurship to be shown more prominently as a career option.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is potentially a major contributor to economic recovery – lots of displaced talent could be supported to create new enterprises. There is a need to encourage more social enterprises to tackle societal issues, especially given Shropshire's Social Enterprise Place status. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-Tech 	Agri-tech generates very low apprenticeship numbers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Just over 100 agri-tech related apprenticeships start each year. Animal Care and Veterinary Science account for the largest portion of agri-tech apprenticeships. 45% of agri-tech apprenticeships are advanced, but not are higher i.e. degree level. 	Agri-tech deep dive, 2020

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-Tech 	Provision of agri-apprenticeships isn't large, but there is some clustering around Marches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 organisations provide agri-apprenticeships nationally and 6 are within 50 miles of Marches which offer 7 of the 12 standards associated with the sector. Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College is largest training provider with Reaseheath and South Staffs following. Harper Adams University, with specialisms in agricultural and rural affairs, offers Degree Level Apprenticeships. 	Agri-tech deep dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-Tech 	There are issues around ability of courses in order to boost apprenticeship numbers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sector generates low apprenticeship numbers because there are no higher level agri-tech apprenticeships, only at Level 3. More needs to be done to drive the development of this opportunity. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-Tech 	Agri-tech sector shows signs of upskilling existing staff to meet evolving needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Half of Marches' agri-tech staff get some training (cf 56% for all sectors) and on average they receive 3.7 days of training when given (cf 2.1 for all sectors locally) 55% of Marches' agri-tech employers expect to need new skills from employees in next 12 months, much of which might be achievable through upskilling existing staff. 	Agri-tech deep dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing (Adv Mfg) 	Staff training levels are low and this may be driven by cost and the time required to train staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Across the Marches, 56% of all staff get some training, compared to 62% in England. However, only 47% receive training in the advanced manufacturing sector. However, for those in the sector that do receive training, the average number of training days is 7.3 which is double the overall Marches overage of 3.7 	Adv Mfg Deep Dive, 2020 Adv Mfg Sector Needs Assessment, 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	Capital equipment costs are a barrier to skills provision in Advanced Mfg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is difficult to provide training where the specialist equipment and knowledge of that equipment is needed; this often requires public intervention. 	Adv Mfg Deep Dive, 2020 Adv Mfg Sector Needs Assessment, 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	The number of Advanced Manufacturing Apprenticeships in Marches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite UK and Marches growth of around 5% pa in apprenticeship numbers, manufacturing apprenticeships haven't grown between 16/17 and 18/19. 	Adv Mfg Deep Dive, 2020

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
	is static overall and very reliant on the RAF.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shropshire accounts for 75% of Marches manufacturing apprenticeships (and the fall in number overall is attributable to Shropshire – Herefordshire (up) and Telford & Wrekin(static) There appears to have been a switch to Engineering from Manufacturing Technologies apprenticeships over the 3 years period 10 providers account for 84% of starts and one (RAF) accounted for over half (1,060 in 28/19) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	Marches appears to do well on higher level manufacturing apprenticeships, but the range of apprenticeships offered locally appears to be narrow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two thirds of all Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies starts are in Advanced Apprenticeships (akin to NVQ Level 3) New degree level apprenticeships have been developed at University of Wolverhampton and Harper Adams University There are 61 providers offering apprenticeships in the advanced manufacturing sector within 55 miles of the (central postcode of) the Marches. Across West Midlands (WM), 35 out of the 94 apprenticeship standards are offered. 28/94 are offered by a sole provider and 10 providers of these are in the West Midlands. 26 of the advanced manufacturing courses were not being catered for anywhere in England, and a further 11 were only available outside West Midlands. 	Adv Mfg Deep Dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	Marches have a growing base of HE Engineering provision in its area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Wolverhampton has a well-established campus in the Marches, located at Priorslee in Telford, specialising in engineering which has recently seen significant investment in its facilities and, overall, Wolverhampton has 1,445 students enrolled on advanced manufacturing subjects The new NMITE institute in Hereford is developing an innovative offer in technology and engineering courses. 	Adv Mfg Deep Dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	Training opportunities need to be more attractive to learners and more relevant modules need to be offered that more closely matched the needs of employers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HVM Catapult believes some of the growing demand can be met by re-channelling learners interested in digital roles towards digital manufacturing roles More modular and flexible training courses are needed to upskill and reskill the existing workforce with together with a responsive teacher training system, 	Adv Mfg Deep Dive, 2020

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		ensures that content and pedagogy can promptly accommodate changes in skills needs.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	Experiences of advanced manufacturing employers could support development of advanced manufacturing skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More engagement with large, advanced manufacturing employers in the Marches around their high-tech capabilities could help to inspire people to gain engineering skills. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	Specialist education can be difficult to deliver due to dispersed employment opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist education is difficult to fund / develop without a critical mass of employment opportunities. Could FE provide high quality generic skills that can be applied to individual settings? 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business & Professional Services (BPS) 	The Marches BPS sector could make better use of apprenticeships at all levels. These should be co-designed with the sector to meet local needs to ensure local people can engage with and benefit from growth in the sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sector has hosted ~1,600 apprenticeship starts in BPS-related subjects pa 16/17 to 18/19. Just over 80% are in Business Management or Administration with a handful in Law and Marketing One third of the BPS apprenticeships in 18/19 were delivered by Telford College (250), Riverside Training Limited (150) and Herefordshire, Ludlow, and North Shropshire College (140) 76 out of the 102 apprenticeship standards associated with the sector are being offered within 55 miles of the Marches. The gaps in provision appear to be in quite niche subject areas (eg actuary, public sector compliance). 	BPS Deep Dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business & Professional Services (BPS) 	The Marches has only a small base of local HE provision in BPS relevant subjects, however larger numbers of students are studying relevant courses on nearby campuses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University Centre Shrewsbury (part of University of Chester) specialises in business and education, and the University of Wolverhampton's University Centre Telford in Southwater delivers education, marketing and business management courses. Across all its campuses University of Wolverhampton has 4,000 students studying subjects relevant to BPS and University of Chester 3,000 (Anecdotal) Harper Adams University is also a major supplier of rural surveyors. 	BPS Deep Dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enviro-Tech 	There appears to be huge scope to increase the number of enviro-tech apprenticeships and amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sector has started just 10 apprenticeships in Marches There are 16 relevant providers within 55 miles HE provision is very limited 20 students at Harper Adams and a further 370 at University of Chester 	Enviro-Tech Sector Needs, 2017 Envirotech Deep Dive, 2020

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
	of HE provision to drive growth and stronger specialisms.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Manufacturing & Processing 	Food and drink apprenticeship numbers are decreasing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food and drink related apprenticeships (Hospitality and Catering) decreased 6.7% in 2018/19 to 250. Telford & Wrekin recorded an increase of 14.3% or 9 apprenticeships in absolute numbers. ABP (major employer and meat processor company) struggle to recruit and train apprentice butchers. There are fewer L2 apprenticeship programmes available as apprenticeships are encouraged at higher levels 	Food and Drink Deep Dive, 2020 Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Manufacturing & Processing 	Effort is needed to make the sector a more attractive destination for learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceptions of the industry are seen as a deterrent for recruitment, creating competition for labour. This is led by issues around image and pay. 	FMP Sector Needs Assessment, 2017 Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health And Social Care 	The care sector and education providers in the Marches have already begun to work together on tackling skills shortages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councils and partners across the LEP area are active in promoting the role of technology to make some care roles more attractive. The care sector is working with Skills for Care to identify future skills needs and develop shared apprenticeships between workplaces and FE colleges. There are a range of skills providers: FE colleges, Shropshire Partners in Care, Royal Shrewsbury Hospital Centre of Excellence in Nursing, University Centre Shrewsbury, University of Wolverhampton Telford, Wye Valley NHS Trust, Robert Jones Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital UCS - new access degree in nursing. Wye Valley NHS Trust - Alternative Route to Specialist Accreditation 	Innovative Healthcare Analysis, 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health And Social Care 	The COVID-19 crisis is leading to increased mental health challenges. There is evidence of over-supply of labour in related skills, but supply and demand of specific skills may need to be monitored.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is nationwide evidence of increasing mental health and wellbeing challenges post COVID-19. The Marches should be aware of the additional demands this may place upon the Health and Social Care sector. 	Anecdotal

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction 	The Marches has a base of HE provision relevant to the construction sector which could be built upon to offer more degree apprenticeship programmes to help meet higher level skills gaps with the right employer involvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HE providers in the Marches delivered graduates in the following courses in 2017/18: Civil engineering > 680; Building > 500; Architecture > 210; Planning (urban, rural and regional) > 90; and Landscape and garden design < 50 Some provision for higher level training for professional roles is available as degree apprenticeship programmes. Expansion requires support from employers to recruit at age 18 rather than 21 (graduate). 	CITB Skills Gap Analysis, 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction 	Construction training has been in decline and could increase supply of trainers by making better use of older workers in the sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Around 20 training providers have delivered construction related training (including apprenticeships) over the last five years. A core network of eight providers has delivered around 90% of that. Provision of training reduced between 2012/13 and 2016/17, with new starters decreasing by 25%. Apprenticeships have increased slightly (23% from 2012 to 2016, driven in Shropshire). CITB suggests there are difficulties recruiting trainers and that retirees could provide Vocational Education Training to provide up to date skills. 	CITB Skills Gap Analysis, 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor economy 	There may be a need for greater accreditation of visitor economy skills to encourage long term careers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, good customer service makes a difference to the strength of the visitor economy and its wider benefits. However, the skills required are not often formally recognised. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education 	Education providers require capital investment in order to provide a comprehensive set of technical qualifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital investment for growth is required to fully develop the capacity for teaching/accommodation and expansion into diversified courses such as apprenticeships and higher technical qualifications. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education 	There is scope for further collaboration between skills providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marches providers need to collaborate with other providers who are already successfully delivering level 4 and 5 curricula in the region. 	Anecdotal

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport Technology 	<p>There is an oversupply of Transport Technology skills in the market.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the academic year 2018/19 there were 1,061 achievements in courses relevant for the transport technologies and logistics sector. There were 579 achievements in Aircraft Operations, followed by 245 achievements in Motor Vehicle Maintenance and Repair. Subject quotient is a measure of specialisation for a subject area. Values above 1 represent relative specialisation. There are 4 courses with subject quotients above 1. These are currently Heavy Equipment Maintenance and Repair (1.03 quotients), Motor Vehicle Maintenance and Repair (2.15 quotients), Aircraft Operations (11.77 quotients), Transportation Operations and Maintenance (1.18 quotients). There is currently an over-provision of people completing courses for how many roles are opening on an annual basis, therefore the provider base is currently oversupplying the labour market. These areas of over provision include, Heavy Equipment Maintenance and Repair, Motor Vehicle Maintenance and Repair, Aircraft Operations. 	<p>Transport Technology Deep Dive, 2021</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport Technology 	<p>The pandemic and Brexit caused a reduced supply of lorry drivers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual population survey estimates show that there were around 278,700 HGV drivers employed across all sectors in 2020, 7% less than in 2019 where around 300,100 were employed. There was a widely reported loss of some 100,000 lorry drivers. There were 1,034,000 job vacancies in the UK in June to August 2021, an increase of 35.2% (269,300) on the previous quarter, and the highest since the series began in 2001. 	<p>Transport Technology Deep Dive, 2021</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality, Catering and Visitor Economy 	<p>There are skills gaps in the Marches Hospitality and Catering and Arts sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vacancy situation in 2019 in the Hotels and Restaurant sector shows that 16% of companies in the Marches had a vacancy that is hard to fill, and a further 8% have a skills shortage vacancy. In the Arts and Other Services sector this is lower at 4% for both. This is compared to an overall England average across all sectors of 8% and 6% respectively. In terms of skills gaps, 23% of establishments had staff who aren't fully proficient within the Hotels and Restaurants sector, with 7% in the Arts and Other Services sector. 7% of all employees within the Hotels and Restaurants sector are not skilled enough, and 2% in the arts and other services sector. 	<p>Hospitality Catering and Visitor Economy Deep Dive, 2021</p>

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality, Catering and Visitor Economy 	<p>Key Marches town centres act as hubs of visitor attractions.</p>	<p>Key Marches town centres are hubs of visitor attractions in the LEP area. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telford and nearby market towns of Ironbridge, Madeley and Wellington: The East of Telford, parts of Dawley and Ironbridge saw growth in jobs since 2016. Shrewsbury: with concentrations of visitor economy jobs in the town centre, and in the outskirts to the north and south. Growth of these sectors has remained relatively flat. Hereford: high concentration of jobs particularly in the city centre, while also just south of the city in Ridgehill & Ballingham where there has been a steady rise in these jobs and pockets of high visitor economy jobs growth around Hereford. <p>Other small towns have differing characteristics. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ledbury, Ross-on-Wye, Ludlow, Church Stretton, Kington and Bridgnorth have high, but distributed, levels of visitor economy jobs. Church Stretton, Bishop’s Castle and Kington have experienced relatively high levels of visitor economy job increases. 	<p>Hospitality Catering and Visitor Economy Deep Dive, 2021</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality, Catering and Visitor Economy 	<p>Across the UK, there are challenges filling vacancies in the hospitality, catering and visitor economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 1,034,000 job vacancies in the UK in June to August 2021, an increase of 35.2% (269,300) on the previous quarter, and the highest since the series began in 2001. As of September 2021, hospitality businesses are more than twice as likely as other industries to be experiencing challenges in filling vacancies compared with normal expectations for this time of year. Between 23 August and 5 September 2021, 30% of hospitality businesses said that vacancies were more difficult to fill than normal. This compares with 13% across all industries (up from 9% in early August). 	<p>Hospitality Catering and Visitor Economy Deep Dive, 2021</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality, Catering and 	<p>There is a shortage of skills in certain visitor economy sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality generally has a lower external skills deficit than other sectors (17% vs 23%), but skilled vacancies (e.g., chefs) are more difficult to fill due to a skill shortage (39% deficit compared to 17% for the rest of the sector). 	<p>Hospitality Catering and Visitor Economy Deep Dive, 2021</p>

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
Visitor Economy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality has a higher internal skills deficit compared to the UK average (7% vs 4%). Overall, employers' biggest challenges in the industry are operational, management and leadership skills. Over the next 5-10 years, both employers and stakeholders considered digital skills, social and emotional skills, and foreign language skills as the most important. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality, Catering and Visitor Economy 	There is a need for a more skills diverse workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to explore options or vocational training offers that support career paths in the sector by working with the sector to raise the profile of skills and careers in hospitality. 	Hospitality Catering and Visitor Economy Deep Dive, 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality, Catering and Visitor Economy 	There is an oversupply of skills in some visitor economy sector related courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the academic year 2018/19 there were 2,968 achievements in courses relevant for the hospitality, catering and visitor economy sector. There were 1,009 achievements in Crafts, Creative Arts and Design, followed by 624 achievements in Art and Design. There are 11 relevant courses with subject quotients above 1, representing a relative course specialisation. There is currently overprovision of people completing courses in comparison to how many roles are opening on an annual basis for 6 courses including, Travel and Tourism, Performing Arts, Music, Drama and Theatre Studies, Art and Design, Crafts, Creative Arts and Design. 	Hospitality Catering and Visitor Economy Deep Dive, 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality, Catering and Visitor Economy 	In 2021, the UK hospitality sector faced labour supply issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In June to August 2021, the UK saw its highest number of quarterly job vacancies since the series began in 2001. As of September 2021, hospitality businesses are more than twice as likely as other industries to be experiencing challenges in filling vacancies compared with normal expectations for this time of year. Between 23 August and 5 September 2021, 30% of hospitality businesses said that vacancies were more difficult to fill than normal. This compares with 13% across all industries (up from 9% in early August). Of all businesses that were experiencing recruitment challenges, one in four (25%) said that a reduced number of EU applicants was a factor. 	Hospitality Catering and Visitor Economy Deep Dive, 2021

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail 	<p>There are low levels of staff training in the wholesale and retail sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Marches wholesale and retail sector, only 49% of staff are trained compared to 60% as a whole across England. 	<p>Retail Deep Dive, 2021</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail 	<p>Issues with skills supply in part resulting from EU exit are causing recruitment issues for the retail sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 23 August and 5 September 2021, 15% of businesses said that vacancies were more difficult to fill than normal, up from 9% in early August. These difficulties coincide with a very busy time for recruitment according to the latest labour market data. Of all businesses that were experiencing recruitment challenges, almost one in four retail businesses (23%) said that a reduced number of EU applicants was a factor. 	<p>Retail Deep Dive, 2021</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail 	<p>There is oversupply of some retail related skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the academic year 2018/19 there were 1,720 achievements in courses relevant for the retail sector. There is currently overprovision of people completing courses in comparison to how many roles are opening on an annual basis. These sectors include, Laundering and Dry Cleaning, Cleaning, Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy, Sport, Fitness Instruction, Coaching, Exercise and Fitness, Recreation n.e.c. 	<p>Retail Deep Dive, 2021</p>

Skills Demand

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital 	<p>Digital skills are regularly identified as a core employee attribute. A lack of digital capability poses a significant threat to social inclusion and the ability for people to improve their quality of life and employment prospects and Marches will need to focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retraining existing employees with the skills needed for changing and new roles Realigning skills and training provision to the needs of digitised employers Increased emphasis on continued professional development and acumen that will enable employees to adapt to changes in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All parts of the Marches have fewer people with Basic Digital Skills than the national average Local residents in the Marches are trailing in terms of basic digital skills competency, which presents challenges in ensuring that all residents and businesses have the capacity to benefit from digital opportunities. 	Marches Digital Strategy, 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ageing Workforce 	<p>Marches' workforce is ageing and needs to accelerate its attraction and retention of younger skilled people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The share of over 65s is growing. The workforce aged 50-64 has the highest proportion of low/no qualifications. 	<p>SEP Evidence Base, 2018</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspiring Young People 	<p>Apprenticeships need to be positioned as a route to recovery for businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprenticeship numbers are expected to fall during COVID and narrative needs to be reoriented to their value for helping businesses refresh and upskill out of the COVID crisis. Signs of displacement from apprenticeships onto Kickstart needs to be monitored and managed. 	<p>Anecdotal</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspiring Young People 	<p>Young people should be supported in understanding the opportunities available to them in the Marches' priority sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to improve communication of roles and progression routes available to parents, careers guidance teams and young people. For example, in relation to the strength of the Food Manufacturing and Processing industry since COVID-19 and the 	<p>Anecdotal</p>

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		opportunities that will arise from greater attention being paid to domestic food supplies.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-Tech 	Agri-tech's future skills needs will become more tech-focused and need to draw from outside traditional sources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-tech sector needs to open itself up to more people to secure the needed skills in new cutting-edge technology like artificial intelligence, gene-editing and robotics, which require engineers, chemists, geneticists and data analysts. There is also a growing focus on low carbon farming, reshoring and sustainability driving the sector that will further re-shape sector drivers and needs. 	Agri-tech deep dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-Tech 	There are growing opportunities for Agri-Tech employment in the Marches, which should be harnessed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is some clustering of Agri-tech delivery capacity around the Marches to build on with a brand-new opportunity of the NI-Park in Newport seeking to bring employers to the region. The Marches engineering and digital capacity could be better supported and harnessed to make the most of this. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	The challenges in Advanced Manufacturing may be specific to the subsector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a very broad definition that should be narrowed by sector. There may be a need for better understanding of the individual skills needs. The demand is for the right skills, not for more general provision where there is an oversupply . 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	Manufactures recognise they need to up-skill and the focus needs to be on technical skills with an innovation and/or commercial focus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marches manufacturing has a relatively youthful profile compared to benchmarks but still needs to consider the implications of replacing skills ageing workers (8,800 people by 2014 -2024). The skills profile for the Marches manufacturing sector shows higher levels skills are under-represented The biggest increases in job roles from 2018 to 2022 are expected to be in Engineering activities and related technical consultancy (302) and Manufacture of metal structures and parts of structures (107) Just over half of Marches manufacturing employers expected to need new skills in the next 12 months (compared to 62% for all sectors) Future drivers of skills demand are expected to be business development among senior managers; highly skilled graduates to 	Adv Mfg Deep Dive, 2020 Advanced Mfg Sector Needs Assessment

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		<p>undertake collaborative R&D; low carbon agenda around energy-efficient technologies and lightweight materials; and exporting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sector needs both detailed subject knowledge and transferable skills to be part of vocational qualifications • Sector needs highly skilled workforce operating in lean and continuous improvement cultures. Growth is also expected in 3D printing, composites and robotics. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Manufacturing 	<p>There appears to be a reasonably high level of job vacancies and staff turnover in the sector, and at higher skills levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were just under 10,000 unique vacancies (against ~30,000 jobs) in Advanced Manufacturing jobs in year to January 2020 in the Marches, roughly evenly split between the three authorities. The top ten recruiters all appear to be agencies. • The top requested skill was mechanical engineering (as expected given the number of jobs it accounts for). Two of the top three job roles with higher numbers of openings are relatively highly skilled and have low vulnerability to automation ie Production managers and directors in Manufacturing (580) and Metal working production and maintenance fitters (306). 	<p>Adv Mfg Deep Dive, 2020</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enviro-Tech 	<p>The Marches enviro-tech labour market seems to be active with vacancies advertised >10% of total jobs. Lots of the roles are lower wage/ skill but there is a tier of professional roles tied to public sector that will continue to create employment opportunities in higher skill enviro-tech roles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment data suggests there were 485 vacancies in 2019 (vs 3,000 jobs). The Environment Agency accounted for 21 with Telford & Wrekin Council seeking a further 9. Other top ten slots include agencies and some consulting companies. Evidence suggest that small companies advertised a small number of roles. • The sector's workforce base is ageing. • The top titles being recruited were Architectural Technicians and Gardeners, with Environmental Officers and Planners. • The top enviro-tech skills being sought were in professional roles ie Planning Permission, CAD and Risk. • The big numbers forecast for future opening by 2022 relate to lower value roles such as Gardeners and Groundsmen. Openings for Environmental Professionals, Town Planning Officers/Technicians are likely to be below 20. 	<p>Enviro-Tech Sector Needs Envirotech Deep Dive, 2020</p>

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Manufacturing & Processing 	Food and drink sector job adverts are increasing, although this was mainly in catering rather than manufacturing. Still there are more annual job openings in food and drink manufacturing than graduates of food and drink manufacturing courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of adverts increased from 319 in January 2016 to 531 in January 2020. This is an increase of 66.5%. Top 10 jobs advertised (48% of adverts) were bar and restaurant workers. 	Food and Drink Deep Dive, July 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defence And Security 	Consideration is required regarding the need for skills growth and coverage across a large geographical LEP region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sector is small and geographically specialised. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defence And Security 	Development of skills and talent is a priority issue for SME cyber security firms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report finds hundreds of unfilled vacancies, due to a City of London pull effect, gap in availability of accredited skills, strong sector growth outstripping supply. This is causing inflated salary costs which prohibit new innovative start-ups. 	Cyber Security SIA, 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health And Social Care 	The ageing population of the Marches is creating growing demand for people qualified in care and is a driver of GVA and jobs for the economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sector accounts for 8.3% of GVA, 14.1% of jobs and 4.8% of establishments in the Marches. The proportion of jobs and GVA is above the national base and the sector has increased its GVA by £123m (the second highest sector increase in real terms, after BPS) Overall specialisation index is at 1.1 with deeper specialisms in residential care (1.87), veterinary (1.76), residential nursing care (1.62), residential care for the elderly and disabled (1.48) and residential care for learning disabilities, mental health and substance abuse (1.46). 	Health and Social Care Deep Dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health And Social Care 	Although not a high paying sector, it is expected to grow in employment terms along with the wider care industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average wage is £21,500, but wages range between industries from £13,600 to £28,700. There are expected to be an additional 1,023 jobs in caring, leisure and other service occupations There is a need (and potential opportunity) for better perceptions of the sector. 	Health and Social Care Deep Dive, 2020 Deep Dive Exec Summary

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health And Social Care 	Nurses and care workers dominate job postings in the Marches in 2020.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These accounted for 14% of all vacancies as of Dec 2020. 	Emsi data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health And Social Care 	The Marches health & care sector has growing numbers of employment opportunities and there is demand for more training provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of job adverts in Health and Social Care in the Marches has increased 151% between 2016 and 2020. The top requested skill is nursing, followed by communication. Management and leadership appeared in 17% of postings. The area's provider base offers a range of courses already but there may be room to grow to meet demand from vocations allied to medicine, nursing, medicine and dentistry, care, optical services. There is a need to invest in training for digital health roles to enhance career development and retain staff. 	Health and Social Care Deep Dive, 2020 Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction 	The Marches has a growing construction sector and demand for qualified construction labour is expected to increase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 2011 and 2016, the construction sector was the largest growing sector in the Marches. Jobs increased 100% in architectural and engineering activities from 2011 to 2016. The Marches LEP construction workforce has experienced a substantial increase of 32% in the last 7 years. Labour demand in the Marches is expected to grow from 20,590 people in 2019 to 21,370 people by 2023. 	SEP Evidence Base, 2018 CITB Skills Gap Analysis, 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport Technology 	The pandemic lockdown resulted in a reduction in UK transport technology job postings – a situation which could return with continued restrictions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The immediate impact of the lockdown for the UK transport technology sector saw a sharp decline in postings in March 2020 (1,264 postings) reaching a low of 840 postings in May. Job postings saw an increase as restrictions were lifted to 1,472 postings in October 2020. The second lockdown in November once again stifled job postings. The sector has since recovered in terms of job postings and reached pre-pandemic levels. 	Transport Technology Deep Dive, 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport Technology 	Due to a lack of skilled transport technology labour supply in the UK other transport methods are being considered such as, drones and other technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drones are starting to be used in a wide range of transport activities, from e-commerce package delivery to fleet management and same-day food delivery. 	Transport Technology Deep Dive, 2021

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
	solutions to replace the need of human labour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The speed, accessibility and low operating costs of drones compared with other modes of transport that require human labour makes them an appealing prospect for companies. • Driverless vehicles are likely to hasten structural change and the development of new industries that will create new opportunities in mobility management, in-transit experience, fleet operations, and security. • It is expected that haulage companies will be amongst the first to adopt fully autonomous vehicles, particularly as HGVs drive on predetermined routes; driverless lorries can increase fuel efficiency by travelling closer together to reduce drag and can go some way towards addressing the HGV driver skills shortage. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality, Catering and Visitor Economy 	In 2021, the UK hospitality sector faced labour supply issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In June to August 2021, the UK saw its highest number of quarterly job vacancies since the series began in 2001. • As of September 2021, hospitality businesses are more than twice as likely as other industries to be experiencing challenges in filling vacancies compared with normal expectations for this time of year. • Between 23 August and 5 September 2021, 30% of hospitality businesses said that vacancies were more difficult to fill than normal. This compares with 13% across all industries (up from 9% in early August). • Of all businesses that were experiencing recruitment challenges, one in four (25%) said that a reduced number of EU applicants was a factor. 	Hospitality Catering and Visitor Economy Deep Dive, 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality, Catering and Visitor Economy 	There is need for skills to be versatile across sectors in hospitality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector-transferable skills will be increasingly important for workers in the hospitality and tourism industries to be more 'sector-mobile'. • Highly trained experts in certain areas can face unemployment during the hibernation of their industries and may not find demand for their expertise in other industries, so need to be more flexible and versatile for income security. 	Hospitality Catering and Visitor Economy Deep Dive, 2021

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail 	<p>There has been a loss of high street demand which worsened during the pandemic.</p>	<p>Factors which have dampened high street demand include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitively priced internet shopping with internet retailers not paying business rates. Retailers with a presence on the high street paid £7.2 billion in business rates in 2018/19, while online traders paid only £457 million on their out-of-town warehouses. COVID-19 - due to the government-mandated lockdowns, the retail industry's shift to digital has become even more marked. With automation also threatening the loss of many retail jobs in future, some are predicting that as much as 95% of shopping will be online by 2040. 	<p>Retail Deep Dive, 2021</p>

Mapping Skills Supply and Demand

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital 	<p>There is a potential mismatch between the skills requirements of key sectors and the supply of skills within the local labour market, with the evolving shape of the local economy and digitisation of all industries a key driver of change.</p> <p>There is more to be done in terms of increasing the role that vocational employment pathways play in delivering a strong supply of digitally skilled people to local labour market, including raising the availability and take-up of apprenticeships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst schools, further and higher education institutions are actively working to embed digital skills within the curriculum and deliver an expanded online learning experience, there is a sense that collaboration with businesses hasn't always been optimal and a new engagement vehicle is needed. There is some uncertainty as to whether the current digital skills offer is best aligned with business needs and whether it is best configured to drive business adoption of digital processes /tools. Skills providers do not have strong evidence to help them re-align digital programmes to meet business needs or latest industry practice /technology. There is a need to rebalance the emphasis between academic and vocational employment pathways, with an expanded role for apprenticeships helping to address skills gaps and recruitment challenges. The demand for digital skills is not isolated to firms which are the most digitally dependent, rather businesses trading across different sectors require a certain baseline of digital skills proficiency. Labour market constraints are a tangible challenge for local businesses, with access to digital skills being a prominent factor, meaning firms are forgoing opportunities to deliver better, more efficient services and generate value from online markets. 	<p>Marches Digital Strategy 2019</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand-Led Provision 	<p>FE colleges are very driven by demand but are not confident they are asking the right questions to ensure their provision meets business needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% of employers in the Marches have a training plan or budget for training in place, this is lower than the England average of 54%, and 34% of employers have no budget or training plan, compared to 31% nationally. On average, staff receive 3.69 training days a year, compared to 3.99 across England 62% of employers in the Marches expect they will need new skills in the next 12 months, this is the same as national levels. 	<p>Deep Dive Exec Summary, 2020</p>

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand-Led Provision 	More could be done to improve communication on skills needs with SMEs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is difficult to access SMEs to understand their skills demands. The education sector requires employers to be more visible with their needs for trainee, apprenticeship or graduate level jobs and work towards talent attraction to keep the available students in the region. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply-led provision 	There is a need for better collaboration between supply and demand of skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A multi-agency and cross-sector approach needs to have clear roles, accountabilities and target outcomes in place. A smart procurement toolkit could help to lift employment and apprenticeships including by helping to transfer apprenticeship levy funds. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-Tech 	There are signs of skills shortage in the sector even though 1) the sector is not reporting current staff lacking proficiency in their work and 2) the overall number of vacancies advertised is small.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 133 vacancies (out of 6,000 jobs) were advertised in 2019, mainly seeking farm workers and owners plus skills in poultry, welfare and agriculture The proportion of vacancies that relate to skills shortages (48%) far exceeds the national and Marches' all sectors picture (22%), however the sector doesn't report high levels of staff not being proficient in their current role. The sector can struggle to recruit as roles are in competition with those offered by employee-valued large employers. 	Agri-tech deep dive, 2020 Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-Tech 	The Marches provides training to people who are likely take up roles in the rest of the UK, but doesn't meet all its own agri-tech training needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The supply-demand balance of agri-tech skills overall is good but this masks an under-supply of agriculture skills and an over-supply of Animal Care and Veterinary Science and Horticulture and Forestry provision. 	Agri-tech deep dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	Recent growth in advanced manufacturing employment is expected to come to a halt, and there needs to be a real focus on upskilling the existing workforce to stay competitive in the face of technological change and drivers emerging from smart tech and Industry 4.0 and low carbon agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although the sector has grown in some sub sectors and in terms of value exports, further expansion in job numbers is expected to be limited over coming years 2022 (just 119 jobs to 32,692). Nearly half the 120 job roles in the sector are expected to reduce in size by 2022. The local sector spans food processing, defence/security and cuts across enviro-tech. The Marches performs modestly on innovation indicators across AI sector. 	SEP Evidence Base, 2018 Adv Mfg Deep Dive, 2020

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	The Adv Mfg sector has been broadly defined and skills promotion efforts need to be relevant to, and reach, businesses and jobs at higher and lower ends of the spectrum, including business that are only partly using advanced processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sector has an overall LQ of 1.3 (based on 2015 employment in Sector Needs Assessment). There are some local specialisms in metals, machinery, office equipment and automotive, including military vehicles, particularly light weighting and composites. The 10 biggest employing subsectors account for 44% of all advanced manufacturing employment and include printing, plus the manufacture of carpentry and joinery, office machinery and equipment, plastic products, metal structures, motor vehicle parts, machining, in addition to technical testing and consultancy 	Adv Mfg Deep Dive, 2020 Sector Needs Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	Skills gaps are not a major driver of vacancies even though the sector faces a major uplift in its higher skills and softer skills requirements if it is to compete in advanced subsectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17% of vacancies in the manufacturing sector are due to skills shortages; this is much lower than some other sectors in the Marches and below the figure for all sectors, both in the Marches (23%) and nationally (22%). Skills shortages are reported at all levels of occupations. Consultations point to a shortage of soft skills, such as attitude and teamwork, for example. Technical skills, machine operatives and elementary occupations are also in short supply. Looking ahead, employers recognise an increased demand for higher level skills capable of implementing new technologies and ways of working. 5% of staff in manufacturing in the Marches are deemed to not be proficient which mirrors the national all sectors' figures. 	Adv Mfg Deep Dive, 2020 Advanced Mfg Sector Needs Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing 	The Marches is training more engineers than the economy is expected to absorb.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Across relevant manufacturing subjects, Engineering is the largest subject area and is also the most oversupplied, by around 2,000 positions against the number of openings expected over the coming year. On the other hand, Manufacturing (which may be transferable skills set) has an undersupply but this is only around 300 positions pa and so not expected to absorb much of the area's surplus. 	Adv Mfg Deep Dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business & Professional Services (BPS) 	The Marches' BPS sector appears to have a high proportion of vacancies given the number of jobs locally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were ~28,000 vacancies in 2019 for BPS roles (against 55,000 jobs) roughly split equally between the three local authorities The major sources of recruitment are agencies and the NHS and the top roles being recruited are accounting, sales, surveyors administrators, 	BPS Deep Dive, 2020

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		<p>account managers, credit managers, receptionists and business process consultants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most common skills being requested are sales, management, communication, customer services and IT (inc high rating for Excel) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business & Professional Services (BPS) 	<p>The BPS sector in the Marches is facing greater skills shortages than other sectors and may struggle to address these gaps through upskilling staff at the relatively low levels of training currently provided by employers. Low rates retention of high qualified young people contributes to the issue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills shortages account for 31% of vacancies in the Marches BPS sector (cf 23% of all sectors locally) and 74% of employers expect to need new skills in the next 12 months. 5% of staff in the BPS staff are deemed to be not proficient, mirroring the overall level for both the Marches and nationally. Training is provided to 46% of BPS staff in Marches cf 56% for all sector and those that undergo training receive 2.9 days cf 3.7 for all Marches sectors. It is important to consider the loss of talented and qualified young people at 18 in the light of this sector's demands and the general lack of L4+ qualifications in the Marches. 	<p>BPS Deep Dive, 2020 Anecdotal</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business & Professional Services (BPS) 	<p>Training provision for BPS in the Marches is misaligned with expected openings and could be re-balanced by a shift from Media and Communication training to Marketing and Sales courses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Marches appears to be undersupplying Marketing and Sales course provision and over supplying Media/Communication and more general Preparation for Work provision (although this may be an issue with the categories). There is also scope to increase provision of management, property, accounting publishing/info service courses. 	<p>BPS Deep Dive, 2020</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enviro-Tech 	<p>The sector appears to have the right skills now, but has a growing need for new skills which it may not generate through upskilling given the amount of training currently undertaken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Futures suggests that in the 10 years to 2024 the sector has a requirement for 83,000 L4 workers (to address growth and replacement) Nearly half of all advertised vacancies are due to a skills gap – much higher than the average and other sectors, however only 2% of staff are currently seen as not fully proficient in their job. Half of staff in the Marches enviro-tech sector receive training (cf 56% all sectors) totalling 2.1 days training (cf 3.7 all sectors) 62% of enviro-tech employers expect to require new skills in next 12 months. 	<p>Enviro-Tech Sector Needs Envirotech Deep Dive, 2020 Anecdotal</p>

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The analysis of supply and demand involves such small numbers and roles that it cannot really help identify mismatches. Energy infrastructure is increasingly becoming digitalised and skills will be required in this area. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Manufacturing & Processing 	<p>There may be scope for high levels of training in the food and drink sector to improve proficiency with a focus on</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> customer service and communication skills digital science and engineering skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48% of staff are trained compared with 60% nationally. 7% are not fully proficient in their role compared with 5% nationally. Increasing use of technology and automation will generate a need for more scientific and engineering skills at professional and technical levels in the food and drink industry. Customer service accounted for 21.5% of jobs in the sector across the Marches. In the Marches' food and drink sector 7% of staff are not fully proficient, compared to 5% nationally. New working practices are increasing the emphasis on team working and employee flexibility within teams. 	Food and Drink Deep Dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Manufacturing & Processing 	<p>There are local and national food industry skills shortages, and this is likely to be worsened by Brexit and rapidly evolving technology. Locally the skills gap in this sector is not as great as other sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Food and Drink Federation Industry Report 2020 highlights a shortage of workers across all occupations and industries within the sector, estimating an additional 140,000 recruits needed by 2024. Many positions currently go unfulfilled due to a lack of labour supply. It is estimated that 12% of workers across the entirety of the food and drink sector are from the EU. Analysis of food and drink job vacancies in the Marches (January 2019 to January 2020) reveals 3,905 unique vacancies. 46.6% were in Shropshire, 28.8% Herefordshire and 24.6% in Telford & Wrekin. The Marches' food and drink sector has 21% of vacancies due to skills gaps. Many of the skills gaps are likely to be around L1 and L2. There are issues around perceptions of the industry. The sector needs to be facilitated by other skills first eg advanced manufacturing 	Food and Drink Deep Dive, 2020 Anecdotal

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Manufacturing & Processing 	All workers need to get upskilled in order to stay relevant to the evolving needs of the sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The food and drink sector is likely to increase use of technology and automation, technical skills, and team working. Increasing regulation will require greater knowledge of food safety issues in all categories of employee. Working Futures data indicates that the proportion of people working at higher skilled levels in the Marches FMP sector will increase over the period 2014 to 2024 but not to the same extent as the national average for the FMP sector and not to the same level as the all-sector average in the Marches. Harper Adams University provides specialist research and some HE provision but there is a small pool of graduates and difficulties attracting and retaining new ones locally. 	Food and Drink Deep Dive, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defence And Security 	The sector faces many similar challenges to the rest of the advanced mfg sector ie need to innovate, upskill and replace ageing employees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sector employed ~11,000 people with focus on defence activities, military vehicle manufacture, private security and cyber/IT Local D&S Sector is concentrated around Telford & Wrekin 	Defence & Security Sector Needs Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital And Creative 	Digital sector demand for skills is growing and expected to extend the digital skills shortage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anecdotal evidence from employers suggest it is increasingly difficult to find people locally with the requisite digital skills to fulfil business needs, leading to recruitment from farther afield through a mobile global workforce. Advanced IT and Software Basic computer literacy/using IT are both identified as commonly lacking among application in the Marches than they nationally There were ~4,000 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) apprenticeships across the West Midlands (circa 4% of total) and growing (18%) 2012 – 2017, albeit marginally slower than nationally (20%). 	Marches Digital Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction 	The construction sector already has skills gaps in skilled trades and professional and managerial roles and emerging technologies involving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority skills gaps include Wood trades & interior fit-out; Electrical trades & installation; and Painters and decorators. High demand occupations are Wood trades & interior fit-out (which already has high levels of training underway); Electrical trades and 	CITB Skills Gap Analysis, 2019

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
	modern methods of construction will further increase demand for particular skills.	<p>installation; Plumbing and HVAC; Painters and decorators; Senior, executive, and business managers; Other construction managers professionals and technical staff; and non-construction staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At risk occupations in the Marches are Scaffolders; Plasterers and dry liners; Bricklayers – uncertain training supply; Glaziers; Architects (demand likely to be met from graduate level recruitment outside of the Marches area) and Non-construction operatives Significant investment in training provision is needed. Enrolments at Shrewsbury Colleges Group have increased 50% in this area in September 2020 with further increased demand for September 2021. 	Anecdotal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport Technology 	There is currently a skills shortage in the transport industry for a number of companies in the Marches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vacancy situation in 2019 in the transport and storage sector shows that 4% of companies in the Marches had a vacancy that is hard to fill. This is compared to an overall England average across all sectors of 8%, and 6% of all employers noting a skills shortage vacancy. In terms of skills gaps, 2% of establishments had staff who aren't fully proficient within the transport and storage sector. 1% of all employees within the transport and storage sector are not skilled enough. Across England, 13% of establishments have staff who aren't fully proficient and 5% have skills gaps. 	Transport Technology Deep Dive, 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport Technology 	There are a skills gaps in the transport technology sector, particularly for higher skilled roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logistics companies have been struggling to fill vacancies due to lack of skills, qualifications and experience. Higher skilled roles such as HGV drivers and mechanics have been harder to fill than those that do not require specialist qualifications. A persistent skills gap may hinder employer's ability to innovate or function at its full potential in terms of resilience, productivity, and profitability. 	Transport Technology Deep Dive, 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport Technology 	The capacity of some transport technology courses could be expanded.	<p>There may be room to grow capacity of courses in the following areas to meet employment demand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automotive Maintenance and Repair Motor Vehicle Operations Transportation Operations 	Transport Technology Deep Dive, 2021

Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation Operations and Maintenance n.e.c. • Distribution and Logistics 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality, Catering and Visitor Economy 	The capacity of some hospitality, catering and visitor economy courses could be expanded.	<p>There may be room to grow capacity of courses in the following areas to meet employment demand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cookery and Catering • Tourism and Hospitality • Food and Beverage Services • Hospitality and Catering n.e.c. • Travel and Tourism n.e.c. • Performing Arts n.e.c. • Applied Art and Design 	Hospitality Catering and Visitor Economy Deep Dive, 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail 	The capacity of some retail courses could be expanded.	<p>There may be room to grow capacity of courses in the following areas to meet employment demand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail Operations, Retailing and Wholesaling n.e.c. • Warehousing and Storage Operations • Funeral Services • Cleaning • Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy • Property and Facility Services • Service Enterprises n.e.c. • Leisure Management • Leisure and Recreation 	Retail Deep Dive, 2021

Labour Market Transition to Net Zero

B.2 The following table assesses the expected impacts of the Labour Market Transition to Net Zero as per the recommendations within the supplementary guidance note. These have been mapped to the themes of automotive, offshore wind and electricity networks, forestry and CCUS/hydrogen as well as considering overall impact.

Table B.1 Document Review - Labour Market Transition to Net Zero			
Theme	Challenge	Evidence	Reference
Labour market transition to Net Zero	The UK government's plan for growth (Build Back Better 2021) highlights the transition to Net Zero as a key pillar of the plan.	The UK Government build back better plan seeks to tackle long-term problems to deliver growth that creates high-quality jobs across the UK. Supporting the transition to net zero is one of three priorities of the plan.	Build Back Better, HM Treasury, 2021
Offshore wind and electricity networks	Offshore wind and electricity jobs will be supported by the Build Back Better Plan.	The Build Back Better Plan seeks to support up to 60,000 jobs in the offshore wind sector. The plan highlights £12 billion of funding is to be made available for infrastructure projects through the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution.	Build Back Better, HM Treasury, 2021
CCUS/hydrogen	CCUS and Hydrogen sector jobs will be supported by the Build Back Better Plan.	The Build Back Better Plan seeks to support up to 50,000 jobs in carbon capture, usage and storage (CCUS) and up to 8,000 in hydrogen. The Build Back Better plan aims to grow current net zero industries and encourage new ones to emerge. This includes working with industry, aiming to generate 5GW of low carbon hydrogen production capacity and capture 10Mt CO ₂ /year using CCUS by 2030.	Build Back Better, HM Treasury, 2021
Automotive (electric vehicles)	Green automotive sector jobs will be supported by the Build Back Better Plan.	The Build Back Better plans to grow current net zero industries and encourage new ones to emerge, include ending the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans in 2030.	Build Back Better, HM Treasury, 2021
Labour market transition to Net Zero	The UK government is committed to a transition to Net Zero carbon emissions. This will have significant	The UK transition to net zero to be one of the dominant labour market trends in the next 30 years: approximately 6.3 million jobs in the UK, about one in five, are likely to be affected by the transition to	Green Jobs Task Force report, 2021

	implications for regional labour markets.	a green economy, with workers experiencing either an increase or decrease in the demand for their skills.	
Labour market transition to Net Zero	As part of the UK government Net Zero strategy, there will be significant public sector activity in supporting the transition towards green skills.	<p>The Green Jobs Task Force commits to support up to 440,000 jobs across net zero industries in 2030, and 2 million jobs in green sectors or by greening existing sectors.</p> <p>Skills supply, demand and matching will be important to this transition. The Green Jobs Task Force outlines plans to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with business to grow green skills in the UK • Use net zero policy and funding to promote the growth of green skills and the green economy. • Reform the skills system to make it more responsive to the needs of employers, so that training providers, employers, and workers are incentivised and equipped to support the transition to net zero • Ramp up support for workers in the high carbon economy to transition to green jobs • Work with business to ensure people from all backgrounds can access the opportunities in the green economy, including through career advice • Provide children and young people with the high-quality education and training they need to work in a future green career, through improving teacher training and development in STEM and other key subjects, and expanding post-16 training programmes in line with the needs of the green economy. 	Green Jobs Task Force report, 2021
Labour market transition to net zero	Jobs of lower skilled workers are more likely to be at risk as industries decarbonise.	Average carbon per worker by education and occupation data highlights that people with low and middle levels of education, and those in process or elementary occupations, work in jobs with a higher carbon intensity (20% more than highly educated).	UK Govt, Net Zero Review, October 2021

		As industries are required to decarbonise, this may reduce job opportunities in certain sectors which may disproportionately affect lower skilled and qualified employees.	
Labour market transition to net zero/Renewable Energy	New jobs are expected to outnumber job losses resulting from the Paris Agreement, with particular job in renewable energy sector jobs.	The International Labour Organisation expects 24m new jobs and 6m job losses by 2030 as a result of the Paris Agreement. Jobs growth will be primarily driven by the renewable energy sector. Growth in this sector will lead to higher job creation than expanding other energy sources and will reduce emissions.	UK Govt, Net Zero Review, October 2021
Labour market transition to Net Zero	Green jobs will be supported by green finance and innovation support.	The UK government Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution will support green jobs. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point 7 seeks to support for around 50,000 jobs in 2030 in relation to green building. Point 10 supports Green Finance and Innovation with the potential to support hundreds of thousands of jobs by 2030. 	The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, 2020
Offshore wind and electricity networks	Offshore wind and electricity jobs will be supported by the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution.	Point 1 of the Ten Point Plan is to advance offshore wind. This could deliver support for up to 60,000 jobs in 2030.	The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, 2020
CCUS/hydrogen	CCUS and Hydrogen jobs will be supported by the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution.	Point 2 of the Ten Point Plan is to drive the growth of low carbon hydrogen. This could deliver support of up to 8,000 jobs by 2030, potentially unlocking up to 100,000 jobs by 2050 in a high hydrogen net zero scenario. Point 3 is to deliver new and advanced nuclear power. This will support a peak of around 100,000 jobs during construction. Point 8 is to invest in carbon capture, usage and storage. This will support for around 50,000 jobs in 2030.	The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, 2020
Automotive (electric vehicles)	Green Automotive jobs will be supported by the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution.	Point 4 of the Ten Point Plan is to accelerate the shift to zero emission vehicles. This will support 40,000 new jobs in 2030. Point 5 of the Ten Point Plan is to boost green public transport, cycling and walking. This will support up to 3,000 jobs by 2025.	The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, 2020

		Point 6 of the plan support jet zero and green ships with up to 5,200 jobs supported by a domestic SAF industry.	
Forestry	A number of forestry jobs will be supported by the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution.	Point 9 of the Ten Point Plan to is protect the natural environment. Up to 20,000 jobs are to be supported from improving flood defences by 2027.	The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, 2020
Labour market transition to net zero	The labour market transition is expected to disproportionately impact workers who are medium-skilled, younger adults or women.	The report provides a profile of workers in ‘categories of eco-transformation’ from those which will flourish and grow to those which will struggle and decline. Those in the latter group are disproportionately comprised of medium-skilled (52%), younger adults (52%), women (42%).	Future Fit & Nesta, 2020
Labour market transition to net zero	Lower skilled employees are less likely to learn new skills.	Employees in sectors expected to flourish under the labour market transition to Net Zero have a participation rate in adult learning of 21% compared to 11% in workers in sectors expected to struggle. Current participation is a strong indicator of future learning and training is more often available to staff who are highly skilled in leader industries. Employees displaced from sectors which are not green may face difficulties re-entering the labour market. Learning new skills is required.	Future Fit & Nesta, 2020
Automotive (electric vehicles)	The increase in production of electric vehicles will likely see increased jobs throughout the West Midlands.	The Midlands is well-known for having a dynamic workforce engaged in the manufacturing and production of vehicles. Around half of automotive companies produce vehicle components in the West Midlands. Sector is expected to preserve jobs across all NVQ levels as existing, large automotive capacity in UK switches to ULEV technology. However, ongoing R&I activities demands highly skilled researchers NVQ Level 4+.	Local Green Jobs – Accelerating a Sustainable Economic Recovery, 2020
CCUS/ Hydrogen Offshore wind and electricity networks	Signifant growth in low carbon jobs is expected by 2050 across England including the West Midlands.	The West Midlands is expected to account for 97,015 low carbon jobs by 2050, 8.2% of England’s total.	Local Green Jobs – Accelerating a Sustainable Economic Recovery, 2020

		<p>Nearly half (46%) of the total low-carbon jobs by 2030 will be in clean electricity generation and providing low-carbon heat for homes and businesses.</p> <p>Over one-fifth (21%) of jobs by 2030 will be involved in installing energy efficiency products ranging from insulation, lighting and control systems.</p> <p>Around 19% of jobs in 2030 will be involved in providing low-carbon services (financial, legal and IT) and producing alternative fuels such as bioenergy and hydrogen.</p>	
CCUS/ Hydrogen	The UK hydrogen fuel cell sub-sector is expected to require high skilled workers.	<p>Hydrogen demand is broadly expected to increase (globally) towards 2050 and this will impact fuel cell manufacturers are critically aware of this.</p> <p>Job demand is highly localised in areas where primary operations are, this includes manufacturing, research, design, sales and marketing. It is possible that manufacturing could be moved abroad to meet major demand markets internationally, whilst key research and innovation jobs would likely remain in the UK. This sub-sector could capitalise on existing expertise from automotive manufacturing workers in localities where current automotive operations are downsizing.</p>	Local Green Jobs – Accelerating a Sustainable Economic Recovery, 2020
Electric Vehicles	The UK electric vehicles sector is expected to develop within manufacturing hubs and require high skilled workers.	<p>It is expected there will be significant scale-up of the electric vehicles sector in the near-term due to the 2035 phase out of Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles, future demand towards 2050 is uncertain due to considerations around autonomous vehicles, integrated public transport and the competition with Hydrogen Fuel Cell Vehicles.</p> <p>Demand for jobs will likely be focussed in regional hubs where existing manufacturing capacity lies; this could include the West Midlands where automotive manufacturing supply chains are already well developed.</p>	Local Green Jobs – Accelerating a Sustainable Economic Recovery, 2020

		Primarily there will be job preservation for lower-skilled workers in the short to medium term as there is a structural change in the automotive sector from ICE to electric motors. There will be ongoing requirements for those high-skilled workers involved in research and innovation.	
Labour market transition to net zero	The Marches Economic Recovery Plan sets out medium term actions to respond to the Net Zero labour market transition.	Net Zero labour market transition related medium-term goals of The Marches LEP Economic Recovery Plan include to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with SAP members to raise the profile of growth sectors, including those within and outside the environmental technologies sector which can directly support the transition to net zero. • Working with the Midlands Energy Hub to promote low carbon and sustainable approaches to public and private sector audiences. • Continue collaboration with the Marches Nature Partnership to respond to national policy development, to shape future rural support programmes and to consider economic opportunities related to the transition to net zero. 	The Marches LEP, Economic Recovery Plan, 2021
Labour market transition to net zero	There is a growing Low Carbon and Environmental Goods and Services sector in the Marches LEP.	Marches LEP's Low Carbon and Environmental Goods and Services (LCEGS) sector was worth £1.8bn to the Marches LEP's economy in 2019/20, employing over 12,500 people. The sector is growing faster in the Marches (6.4%) than in the wider region (5.9%) but more slowly than in the UK (8.1%). However this is not translating to growth in jobs at the same rate as the region or UK.	Marches LEP Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services Market Snapshot, 2021
Hydrogen Offshore wind and electricity networks	Renewable energy makes up a large proportion of the Marches LCEGS sector.	In 2019/20 Marches LEP's Low Carbon and Environmental Goods and Services sector was made up by the following proportions: Renewable Energy 39%, Low Carbon 39% and Environmental 21%. There are relatively strong sales in the following sub-sectors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Technologies - £286m sales with employees up 5.9% from 2017/18 to 2019/20 	Marches LEP Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services Market Snapshot, 2021

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wind - £286m sales with employees up 6.1% from 2017/18 to 2019/20 • Alternative Fuels - £260m sales with employees up 13% from 2017/18 to 2019/20 • Photovoltaic - £191m sales with employees up 5.8% from 2017/18 to 2019/20 	
Labour market transition to net zero	There are a number of skills gaps in the Marches LCEGS sector.	<p>Skills gaps are present across the roles of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production engineers • Power distribution engineers • Technicians • Semi-skilled workers • Maintenance engineers • Specialists/consultants • Administrative workers 	Marches LEP Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services Market Snapshot, 2021
Labour market transition to net zero	The Marches LEP Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services sector will require growth in employees to reach net zero targets.	<p>Estimated growth in employees for the Marches LEP to reach net zero by 2030 is between 20-58% in the Midlands Engine area.</p> <p>In terms of changes in number of employees, there are three factors in play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The usual increase in employment numbers through normal sector growth • The additional increase in employment numbers needed to achieve net zero • These two growths are moderated by the introduction of new technologies, technology compression and changes in practice over time. 	Marches LEP Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services Market Snapshot, 2021

Appendix C - Positive Impact Stories

Examples presented in the 2021 Local Skills Report

Figure C.1 Demand-led Apprenticeship Courses

Impact on Local Skills Provision		
<p>Training provider: SBC Training Employer: AICO Location: Oswestry Cross-cutting skills priority: Delivering responsive demand-led provision Timescale of approach: Long term</p>		
<p>"Through strong partnership working, we have provided bespoke and enhanced apprenticeship training for AICO which has delivered nine apprentices and boosted local employer support of apprenticeships." Clair Schafer, SBC Training</p>		
<p>Issue targeted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AICO is a market leader in domestic fire and carbon monoxide detection. It has an ambitious growth plan including workforce expansion of 10-15%. - The organization has very high standards of quality and customer service and identified that expanding its workforce via apprenticeships would enable it to embed the values and skills needed. - The organization has just completed the move to a new prestigious custom-built premises in Oswestry and is committed to growth in this area. 	<p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AICO partnered with SBC Training to plan and design the apprenticeship programmes needed. The organization has also enhanced the mandatory apprenticeship standards by adding industry specific modules which the apprentices follow. 	<p>Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 9 apprentices trained in Customer Service, Infrastructure Technician, Warehousing or Digital marketing as part of an ongoing programme. This is in line with the LEP's aim to increase apprenticeships. - The project has been successful because of the synergy and shared values between employer and provider resulting in strong partnership working. - AICO is now a strong advocate of apprenticeships and promotes this whenever possible. - This illustrates the importance of having the right mix of high-quality training provision which enables employers to identify the best solutions.

Source: SBC Training, 2021

Figure C.2 Skills development in a priority sector

Impact on Local Skills Provision		
<p>Provider: University of Wolverhampton Location: Telford with Marches-wide impact Cross-cutting skills priority: Skills provision Timescale of approach: Long term</p>		
<p>"The Centre of Excellence will offer people the opportunity to train, and remain, in the region and it will offer opportunities for Marches businesses working in technologically advanced areas of Health and Social Care (e.g. Bronze Labs, Living Circle). This approach will bring skills development to the forefront and build on the Marches' educational strength to further drive growth and employment." Dr Sharon Arkell, Director of Institute of Health</p>		
<p>Issue targeted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hotspots of health professional shortages - Need for increased training provision of nurses and other health professions to meet existing, growing demand 	<p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of a state-of-the-art facility that providing a highly trained local workforce for local jobs - The projects aims to create: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 new multidisciplinary nationally recognised centre of excellence for practitioners in the field of Allied Health, Social Work and Care and Health Professions by 2021 - a minimum of 10 new courses at the Centre by 2025 - 2 new Apprenticeship programmes at Telford and recruit 174 apprentices in the field of Health and Social Care and Allied Health by 2025 - 1152m2 of new/improved learning/teaching space by March 2021 	<p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To attract 1313 new learners into the areas of Health, Allied Health and Social Care by 2025. - To develop new partnerships with regional stakeholders to support Marches workforce development needs as a result of the centre being operational by 2025 - To have showcased the project to at least 1 national forum by 2025 as an example of best practice. - To create 72 new jobs in the Marches region by 2025

Source: University of Wolverhampton, 2021

Figure C.3 Partnership working on digital skills provision: the SOLVD initiative

Enhancing Local Knowledge

Provider: University of Wolverhampton with Telford & Wrekin Council
 Location: Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire
 Sector priorities: Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, Digital, Agri-tech
 Timescale of approach: Project running until June 2022, with possible extension until December 2022

"SOLVD is a new initiative between the University of Wolverhampton and Telford & Wrekin Council to support local SMEs improve their knowledge and implement digital technologies to improve productivity leading to increase profit and growth. Digital technologies support is offered in AI/ML, 5G, Additive Manufacturing/Robotics, Cybersecurity, Immersive-technologies, IoT & sensors, Big-Data Analytics." Professor Amar Aggoun, Dean, Faculty of Science and Engineering

Issues targeted:

- Businesses inability to recognize their digital potential leaving businesses to lag behind their competitors
- Businesses unaware of innovation support available including university expertise and support with technology demonstration & implementation
- Businesses inability to invest in digital technologies leading to weak level of innovation and under-investment by digital enterprise businesses that have the ability to grow

Activity:

- Delivered 12 hours of initial support to 6 SMEs in the digital & creative, business/IT/management consultancy, IoT, cybersecurity and community education
- On-going initial 12 hours of support with another 10 SMEs
- 3 case studies published with VRSS, Purple Frog Systems Ltd and Lockdown Cybersecurity Ltd
- 5 R&D collaboration projects with a duration of c. 16 days currently being initiated
- Technology and sector-based briefing events and masterclasses in development and offered online

Impact:

- Purple Frog Systems Ltd has created 1 job as a result of the support received
- Support provided to SMEs include business analysis and digital roadmap, expert advice on appropriate digital technologies to implement, support to access funding & collaboration with other companies
- Dissemination and demystification of digital technologies; how they can help improve SME productivity and growth

Source: University of Wolverhampton, 2021

Figure C.4 Skills development in a priority sector

Covid-19 Recovery & Renewal

Provider: University of Wolverhampton
 Location: Hereford with Marches wide impact
 Cross-cutting skills priority: Digital
 Timescale of approach: Long term

"The project, still in its infancy and despite the pandemic, has made strong contributions to the local economy. From generating £4.9 in local spend during the construction phase to attracting global talent and industry to its Cyber Fringe Festival." Professor Prashant Pillai, Head of School of Mathematics and Computer Science

Issues targeted:

- Marches productivity gap with the rest of the UK
- Importance of skills and higher value employment around Marches centres of economic activity such as Hereford
- Need to stimulate innovation, start-ups and growth in sectors with cyber-security interests

Activity:

- Development of an eco-system offering specialist innovation workspace, research facilities and training space to local businesses and agencies at The Centre for Cyber Security
- Facility is due to open in summer 2021
- Cyber Fringe Festival launched November 2020 to raise awareness of the Centre and local expertise, facilitate knowledge exchange & boost talent attraction

Impact:

- 72% spend within 40 miles (over £4.9m)
- Fringe event hosted 56 speakers with over 542 online attendees from across the world, employer partners included Titania, IASME, Kinetic 6 and the UK Skills Academy

Source: University of Wolverhampton, 2021

Figure C.5 Use of digital and partnership working to reduce barriers to participation

Impact on local skills provision

Provider: Derwen College, working with Premier Inn
 Location: Shropshire
 Cross-cutting skills priority: Reducing barriers to employment & demand-led provision
 Timescale of approach: Short-medium term

"By providing digital support tools alongside college based and external work experience opportunities, Derwen College enables young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to work and live as independently as possible." Andrew Smith, Business and Finance Director, Derwen College

Issue targeted:

- Need for employment experience for young people with SEND to help them gain skills for work and achieve increased independence in the workplace

Activity:

- Derwen College offers students work experience in its café, restaurant, hotel and food centre
- A Premier Inn housekeeping app has been developed with Local Growth Funding to support hotel work placements.
- The app guides students through the routine required to prepare a room to Premier Inn standards by providing colour-coded routes for tasks and video demonstrations

Impact:

- The app has proven successful in helping Derwen College students to work independently through work experience placements and gain the skills and confidence for paid work
- This demonstrates the potential for digital technology to help reduce barriers to employment and independent living.

Source: Derwen College, 2021

Figure C.6 Skills development in a priority sector

Impact on Local Skills Provision

Skills Provider: Shrewsbury Colleges Group (SGC)
 Location: London Road Campus, Shrewsbury, Shropshire
 Sector priority: Automotive/Manufacturing Engineering
 Timescale of approach: Immediate

"Growth Deal funding enabled Shrewsbury Colleges Group to respond to continued growth in demand for specialist skills in Automotive/Manufacturing Engineering by supporting a project to expand facilities and provide additional training for this key sector. The initial investment from the Marches LEP under the growth deal facilitated the further investment from the college and partners in the industry." Andy Lee, Director of Employer Engagement, Shrewsbury Colleges Group

Issue targeted:

- Requirement to further enhance training in the priority sectors of Automotive and Manufacturing Engineering
- Particularly critical is supporting the upskilling of those who are currently employed within the Automotive sector, in the specialist areas of MOT, Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) and Hybrid Vehicle, where no regional training is currently available

Activity:

In collaboration with partners from the sectors the project achieved:

- construction of a new Automotive Training Centre for full time and apprentice learners, with the latest equipment available
- reconfiguration of the existing Automotive workshop, to form a specialist centre for upskilling those within the Automotive industry in emerging technologies and MOT courses.
- enabling the expansion of the Engineering department into some of the vacated workspace

Impact:

- New Automotive Centre of 840m2, with value of c.£950k for c.£600k total investment
- Re-developmental of 390m2 of existing workshop
- Additional 80 learners by September 2022
- 2 jobs created at SGC
- Collaborative working partnerships/investment with four leading industry based companies
- Sustainable growth in training and responsiveness to regions employment needs (including specialist), with emerging technologies
- Increased MOT/Hybrid courses confirmed 2021, new Level 4 Technician and ADAS to follow

Source: Shrewsbury Colleges Group, 2021

Figure C.7 Skills development in priority sectors

Covid-19 Recovery and Renewal Plans

Provider: The Centre for Research into Environmental Science and Technology (CREST) at University Centre Shrewsbury
 Location: Marches LEP
 Sector priorities: Enviro-tech, Construction, Advanced Manufacturing
 Timescale of approach: Immediate

“CREST develops and increases the productivity of environmental science and technology businesses in the area.” Prof. Julieanna Powell-Turner, Director of Crest

Issues targeted:

- Requirement for research and specialist advice for SMEs and start-ups
- Need to develop innovation and products and support new skills
- Need for increased productivity, skills and employment during post-COVID recovery

Activity:

- CREST was set up to develop and increase the productivity of environmental science and technology businesses in the region
- Research undertaken includes: Air soil and water analysis; alternative raw material reuse; carbon innovation including Net zero; sustainable supply chain support; waste and resource assessments
- Business networks held include: Shrewsbury Geospatial Group, Shrewsbury Water Forum, PLASTICS network
- Networking events e.g. Smart Rural series incl: energy, water, digital skills and transport and, NetZero skills workshops

Impact:

- Creation of opportunities for student placements (12 to date) and project work in industry
- ‘Triple innovation helix’ through engagement with the business community, HE and other public sector bodies where new ideas and opportunities are tested
- Enable SMEs increase their productivity and clean growth in line with the Marches Local Industry Strategy
- Catalyst for larger institutional and multi-HEI collaborations
- The work of CREST will be even more important as part of post-COVID economic recovery

Source: Shrewsbury Colleges Group (SGC), 2021

Figure C.8 Use of digital and partnership working to reduce barriers to participation: Telford College’s Augmented and Virtual Reality Suite

Covid-19 Recovery and Renewal Plans

Provider: Telford College
 Location: Marches wide
 Cross-cutting skills priority: Driving digital throughout
 Timescale of approach: 12 months, March 2021 – March 2022

“It is an exciting opportunity to work in partnership with Telford College to create and develop our AR compliance application” David Wells, Executive Director of Wrekin Housing Trust, commenting on the development of Virtual Reality Care Home software

Issues targeted:

- Need for improved digital skills capabilities as outlined in the Marches Digital Skills Strategy
- During the recent pandemic it very quickly became apparent innovative and creative ways of engaging with employers and students were required to ensure that their skills would continue to be developed.
- Teaching remotely, the College was challenged to develop real world skills within a practical setting, such as a construction site or automotive workshop.

Activity:

- Utilising the technology within its AR/VR suite, the College has adapted learning provision to meet the needs of students and employers.
- For example, the College’s Health & Safety Training Environment Software (H.A.S.T.E) allowed students to immerse themselves in a virtual scenario from which to identify potential hazards and risks either independently or in a tutor lead session.

Impact:

- Students and employers have continued to develop skills, including core digital skills, to a high standards throughout the pandemic.
- Over 2000 students have benefited from this technology
- Moving forward the college is continuing to enhance resources which support the use of digital in skills development and further share good practice.

Source: Telford College, 2021

Figure C.9 Skills development in priority sectors

Impact on Local Skills Provision

Provider: Herefordshire, Ludlow & North Shropshire College
 Location: Herefordshire and neighbouring counties
 Sector skills priority: Advanced Manufacturing
 Timescale of approach: Long term

"It was a really interesting course with plenty of hands-on experience and practical lessons. It gave me a good basis in all aspects of engineering from milling and turning to computer aided design and electrical, which I chose to specialise in. There is a good range of engineering equipment to use at the College, which helps in taking the theoretical lessons into practical." Robert Ralph, HNC Engineering Student (Maintenance Engineer, Henry Weston's Cider)

Issues targeted:

- Need to develop the manufacturing sector skills base to maximise future opportunities
- Requirement for College investment in robotics, pneumatics and automation control training equipment to deliver skills provision

Activity:

- c£100k awarded to Herefordshire & Ludlow College by Marches LEP as part of a joint College/HGTA bid to secure capital investment to support manufacturing sector skills
- Purchase of equipment to introduce Advanced Manufacturing technologies into the existing Engineering curriculum
- Launch of new higher level provision - an Higher National Certificate (HNC) in Computer Aided Manufacture & Automation and in Electrical & Electronic Control Engineering
- A top-up HND in Engineering is now being developed for a Sept 2021 launch

Impact:

- Training benefitting 100+ Level 3 students and apprentices each year
- 30+ HNC starts each year from a wide range of engineering and manufacturing sector employers in the region.
- Support expansion and improved productivity in advanced manufacturing
- Increased employer investment in skills
- Helped to meet replacement demand
- Improved the pipeline from education to employment in the advanced manufacturing sector

Source: Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College, 2021

Figure C.10 Skills development in priority sectors

Impact on Local Skills Provision

Provider: Herefordshire, Ludlow & North Shropshire College
 Location: Herefordshire and neighbouring counties
 Sector skills priority: Agriculture & Food
 Timescale of approach: Long Term

"I chose Herefordshire & Ludlow College because it was close to home for me, I also know it is a good place to come from friends and neighbours. I would definitely recommend the course and the College to a friend as it's really easy to get to and the course is very flexible." Agricultural student at Herefordshire and Ludlow College

Issue targeted:

- Need to support the food and agriculture sector in developing their skills base, equipping them to maximise future opportunities

Activity:

- The Marches LEP awarded c£100k to Herefordshire & Ludlow College, as part of a joint College/HGTA bid to secure additional capital investment
- Purchase of a GPS tractor that supports skills development in use of the tractor technology compared with traditional farming methods
- The tractor is used in the delivery of agriculture courses utilising the organic farm owned by the college
- Apprentices and full time students use the tractor to support the ploughing and estate skills required at the farm

Impact:

- Helped to support students studying on full time, part time and apprenticeship Agriculture courses
- Students of all ages engaged in basic starter training, retraining and upskilling
- Helped to meet replacement demand and improve the progression from education to employment and progression within the food and agriculture industry
- The tractor is used by students and farm workers to supply the baby food industry.
- Increase in full time student numbers

Source: Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College, 2021

Figure C.11 Skills development in priority sectors

Impact on Local Skills Provision

Provider: Herefordshire, Ludlow & North Shropshire College
Location: Herefordshire and neighbouring counties
Sector skills priority: Manufacturing
Timescale of approach: Long Term

"I felt I was a well qualified welder and fabricator, the course at the college allowed me to explore welding techniques I had not tried before." Welding and fabrication student at Herefordshire and Ludlow College

Issues targeted:

- Need to support the manufacturing sector in developing their skills base, equipping them to maximise future opportunities.
- Skills requirements around energy and manufacturing.

Activity:

- The Marches LEP awarded c£100k to Herefordshire & Ludlow College, as part of a joint College/HGTA bid to secure additional capital investment
- The College invested in new equipment for welding techniques
- This allowed for further development of apprentices and full time students in fabrication and welding skills.
- Purchase of a plasma cutter and extraction system enhanced and upgraded tired facilities

Impact:

- Helped to support expansion and improved delivery of welding courses and modules to varying age groups across the Marches and surrounding counties.
- Students of all ages engaged in basic starter training, retraining and upskilling.
- Helped to meet replacement demand and improve the progression from education to employment and progression within the industry.
- Increase in part time students and apprentices.

Source: Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College, 2021

Examples presented in the 2022 Local Skills Report

Figure C.12 Shropshire Youth Hub

Impact on Local Skills Provision

Employer/Provider: Shropshire Youth Hub – Enable Supported Employment Services in partnership with DWP and Shropshire Council.
 Location: Shropshire
 Sector/Cross-cutting skills priority: Inspiring Young People, Tackling Barriers to Participation
 Timescale of approach: Immediate to medium-term

“The Shropshire Youth Hub is central to the support for anyone aged 16 to 24, particularly in Shrewsbury, Oswestry and Bridgnorth. So far, many young people have benefited from the guidance they have received, which will help them to go onto a brighter, secure future.”
 Mercia District Employer & Partnership Leader, Department for Work and Pensions

Issue(s) targeted:

- Tackling youth unemployment using a person-centred approach.
- Overcoming barriers to engagement and access to training and routes to employment.
- Developing and refreshing relevant skills.
- Identifying appropriate pathways and supporting progression routes to employment.

Activity:

- Career advice and guidance
- CV and interview training and support
- Support for those who have entered employment
- Job coaching to help someone learn a new role
- Travel training
- Direct links with Shropshire’s clinical services, functioning as a part of the clinical and care network

Impact:

- Removing barriers to open up employment opportunities for young people which also improves health and builds self-worth, as well as bringing financial and social independence.
- Supporting people to secure sustainable employment and employers to find long-term employees who are committed to their role and organisation

Source: Shropshire Youth Hub, 2022

Figure C.13 HGV Skills Training

Covid-19 Recovery and Renewal

Employer/Provider: Telford College
 Location: Marches-wide
 Sector/Cross-cutting skills priority: Delivering Responsive Demand-Led Provision, Strengthening Supply Capacity
 Timescale of approach: Immediate

“[HGV Skills Bootcamps] are being delivered in partnership with employers, providers and local authorities, to help people gain skills for life, support skills demands in their local area, and ultimately to help people get a better job. We want to work with the public, employers and stakeholders to build some real momentum around this innovative reskilling model.”
 Claire Barker, Assistant Principal for Employer Engagement and Skills, Telford College

Issue(s) targeted:

- Supporting the government’s drive to deliver skills for life and address the lack of qualified drivers causing serious disruption to the UK’s logistics and delivery chains.

Activity:

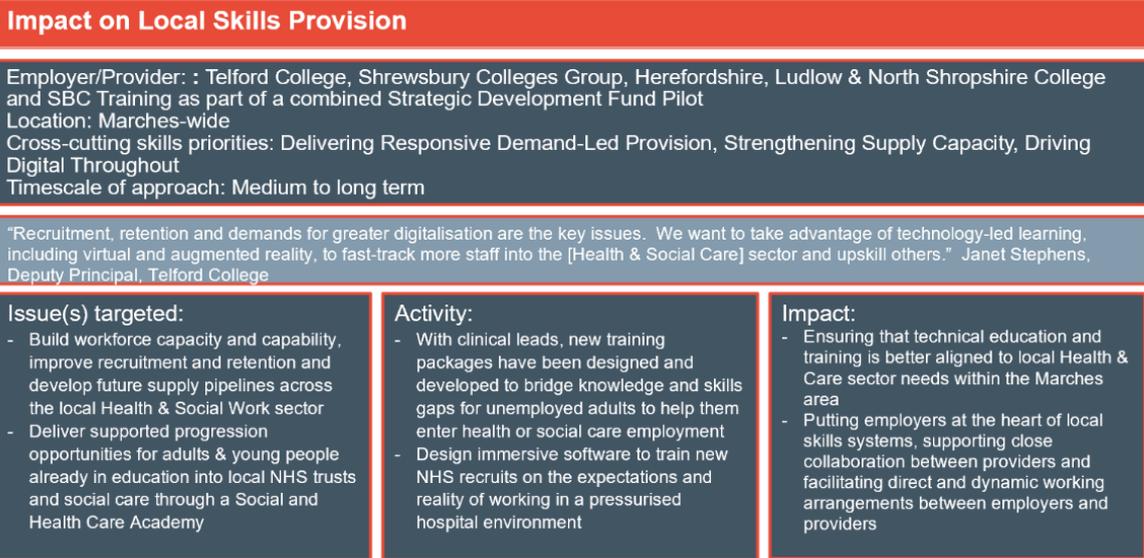
- The college is offering seven different HGV training pathways as part of the Government’s Lifetime Skills Guarantee, which is designed to help everyone gain ‘skills for life’.
- Provision includes ‘back to wheels’ refresher programmes to help drivers return to previous roles, opportunities for existing drivers to upskill and upgrade, and a choice of ‘novice to category C’ programmes for newcomers to the sector.
- Skills Bootcamps are open to both employed and unemployed adults.

Impact:

- Offering people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills and fast-track to an interview with a local employer.
- Increasing the number of qualified HGV drivers available to fill current vacancies within the UK logistic, distribution and transportation sector.

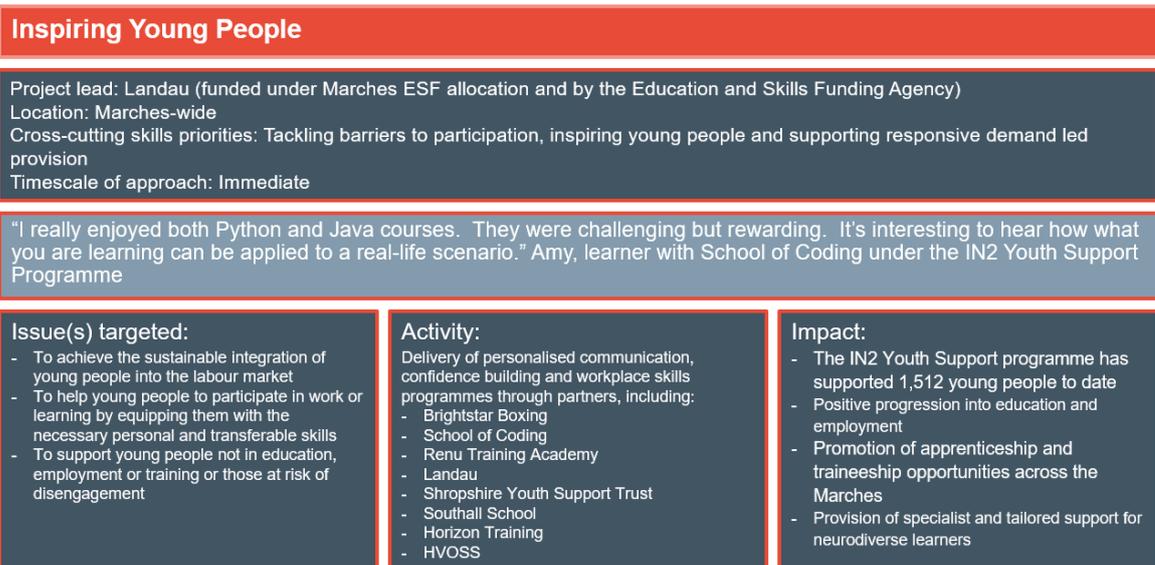
Source: Telford College, 2022

Figure C.14 Marches Strategic Development Fund Pilot



Source: Telford College, Shrewsbury Colleges Group, Herefordshire, Ludlow & North Shropshire College and SBC Training, 2022

Figure C.15 IN2 Youth Support Programme



Source: Landau, 2022

Figure C.16 Extended Veterinary Education and Research Facilities

Impact on Local Skills Provision

Provider: Harper Adams University
 Location: Based in Telford & Wrekin local authority with national and international impact
 Cross-cutting skills priority: Strengthening Supply Capacity
 Timescale of approach: Long term

Harper Adams University Vice Chancellor, Professor Ken Sloan, said: "We are delighted to have been awarded funding to extend our veterinary education and research facilities. The recent launch of the Veterinary Education Centre and our Harper Keele Vet School offers access to a leading-edge learning environment."

Issue(s) targeted:

- New higher level skills provision delivered locally
- Drives support for the local, national and international agri food sector through investment in Marches based asset
- Barriers to participation tackled through development of alternative entry routes
- National shortage of veterinary surgeons, exacerbated by EU exit's impact on staff numbers working in the UK and additional export requirements

Activity:

- Development and delivery of new collaborative programme underpinned by investment in Marches-based institution and use of existing farm, laboratory and teaching facilities
- Additional capital funding of almost £500k secured thanks to a successful Strategic Priorities Grant from the Office for Students to support teaching and learning in veterinary medicine, veterinary nursing, veterinary physiotherapy and allied professions at Harper Adams University

Impact:

- Higher than predicted recruitment to Veterinary Medicine and Surgery (BVetMS) programme
- New capital funding to enhance graduate employability and address skills needs, especially technical provision at Level 4 and 5
- Local response to national shortage and opportunity to raise profile of veterinary roles, with a unique focus on the agri-food sector
- Collaboration with other veterinary schools across the UK

Source: Harper Adams University, 2022

Figure C.17 NMITE Employability Initiatives

Impact on Local Skill Provision

Provider: NMITE (part funded under Marches ESF allocation and match funded by NMITE)
 Location: Herefordshire
 Cross-cutting skills priorities: Tackling barriers to participation, inspiring young people and supporting responsive demand led provision
 Timescale of approach: Immediate

"This has the potential to be transformative for the Herefordshire business community, characterised by its high proportion of SME employers. The future Herefordshire-wide graduate training programme, amongst other initiatives, will help make Herefordshire businesses more appealing on a national scale." Toby Kinnaird, Head of Partnerships at NMITE.

Issue(s) targeted:

- Tackling barriers to participation and inspiring young people - Herefordshire is a cold spot on the social mobility index, with wages and qualification levels below the national average
- Supporting responsive demand led provision - smaller businesses feel hampered by the lack of appropriate skills and vacancies are hard to fill.

Activity:

- Develop and promote an Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Skills Youth Network
- Develop a Future Skills Group
- Provide Business Skills Gap Coaching
- Facilitate an Employer Engagement Forum
- Offer careers advice for school pupils and add value to the Enterprise Advisor Network element of the Marches Careers Hub
- Develop a Herefordshire Placement Programme

Impact:

- Launched in Summer 2021, the project is designed to add value to existing Marches Careers Hub, Marches Growth Hub and other local provision to:
- Help SMEs and microbusinesses understand gaps and opportunities in their labour market skills and offer flexible support .
 - Engage SMEs and microbusinesses with educators (schools, colleges, FE and HEIs)
 - Develop enterprise skills amongst young people

Source: NMITE, 2022

Figure C.18 Marches Careers Hub

Taking a Local Leadership Role

Provider: Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (funded by Careers & Enterprise Company)
Location: Marches-wide
Cross-cutting skills priority: Inspiring Young People
Timescale of approach: Current funding to 31 August 2022

“The Marches Careers Hub enables consistent, accelerated and progressive careers support to young people across the Marches. It connects businesses with schools and colleges to improve outcomes for young people, education and employers.”
Angela Tellyn, West Midlands Regional Lead, Careers & Enterprise Company

Issue(s) targeted:

- Drives improvement in careers education by:
- Supporting employers to build long term, sustainable and mutually beneficial partnerships with schools and colleges
 - Providing opportunities for schools and colleges to collaborate and innovate in the development of careers programmes which help students to find their next best step and meet local needs
 - Delivering professional development opportunities and peer-to-peer support for Careers Leaders

Activity:

- Development of network of Cornerstone Employers
- Creation of communities of practice programme for Careers Leaders to share good practice and disseminate effective approaches to strategic careers programme
- Development and delivery of virtual careers fair to support young people in understanding local opportunities and routes into different careers

Impact:

- Increased collaboration between schools and colleges to improve the consistency of careers provision and deepen impact, measured through Gatsby Benchmarks
- Cornerstone Employers promoting benefits of employer/education linkages through peer recommendation
- 600 young people and 18 exhibitors attended the virtual careers fair held in July 2021. Resources remained live until end of January 2022 to encourage additional employer encounters for further impact.

Source: Marches Local Enterprise Partnership, 2022

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London: 0207 336 6188 Manchester: 0161 234 9910